JOB Overseas
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SUNDAY MOURNER MAGAZINE
TIME TO MAKE MONEY, GIRLS!
Hold off buying that next 'must have' shoes, say experts. Master control over impulse buying to make your way to financial health.

SUNDAY BIZ / B2-1
BALLERINA LISA
Manoja learns ropes of running a venture via long distance

LIFESTYLE / D1
CREATING FAMILY SUMMERS
to remember: Taking kids on vacation trips is family bonding at its best.

PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER
Sunday, May 6, 2007

Agri putting up P2-B nat'l grains highway
By Jerry H. Bacon

WORLD / A26
PARIS HILTON
sentenced to 45 days in jail for violating her probation over a traffic offense.

SPORTS / A30
MAYWEATHER
oddsmakers' favorite over De la Hoya today

FILIPINOS CAN LIVE ON RICE ALONE. A farmer works hard in a dryfield in Barangay San Antonio, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, as he harvests and gets food for the table but what represents the meaning of life itself.

Binay: Thank you, GMA

Suspended Makati mayor says Ms Arroyo ensures his victory

By Tarra Quismundo, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Jodi Pi. Aurelio

MAKATI MAYOR JEJOMAR BINAY, BATTLING A NEW SUSpension order that the Department of the Interior and Local Government served him late Friday night, said President Macapagal-Arroyo should be credited for boosting his re-election bid.

"I am inviting you to thank Ms. Arroyo because your votes for me are even more necessary," Binay, the president of the United Opposition, told some 2,000 cheering supporters gathered in front of the Makati City Hall past midnight on Friday.

Binay's last title stated, Binay added: "Tonight, we signed showing the prevailing spirit among the people of Makati. Please we are challenged to a fight, we fight."

To this, Binay-Angeles, his friend and colleague in the law profession, rushed to Binay's side shortly after hearing about the new 90-day suspension order.

"Because of this, he might get 150 percent, 160 the votes[]. Even those who are anti-Binay will vote for him because of this," Angeles said.

Binay's post is being contested by his rival Kapal, who enjoys the backing of Malacañang.

Into the broad-ax Opposition said the suspension order issued by the Ombudsman spoke of the Arroyo administration's "desperation" to derail Binay's campaign, as well as those of the GO-team, rival candidates.

"This is they wiretapped (the phone of) ex-President Cory Aquino, then they got rushed Mahiri Ketch. And now they want to suspend Mayor Binay. Binay came to the unstoppable conclusion that they will lose the national elections, the Administration of Ms Arroyo and her cronies have taken the low road and chosen to mortify/ harass the leadership of the Genuine Opposition," said GO campaign spokesperson.

BINAY, A26

THE INQUIRER READ-ALONG hosts its first session on Saturday with actress Marsha Reyes reading a story to children aged 7 to 13 at the PDR library. To be held twice a month, the event, Read Along on May 26 will feature Miranda Kimberly who made history when she graduated summa from UP at 16. (Story on Page A6.)

Candidate can't spell, is declared a nuisance

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IF YOU CAN'T SPELL "INDEPENDENT," YOU can be declared a nuisance candidate. And there aren't enough unscrupulous elections officials around.

The Commission on Elections has declared a certain Jonathan Independiente candidate—the first election case to be resolved as Metro Manila enters the local campaign league.

Several nuisance candidates including a comedian-movie star both ran for mayor of candidacy (COC). "It is telling that he re-appointed unqualified 'independent' as he is appointed 'elected unqualified' seats as an

CANDIDATE'S, A10

ESCUDERO: Suddenly I believe in motherhood

First time father Chiz expecting twins

By TJ Burgonio

CHILIS THE FOUNDER OF OTHER SEN atorial candidates, the wife of Senator Maker Lesher Ernesto "Chiz" Escudero has opted to stay away from his motorcades, campaign rallies and road shows in the metropolis, and elsewhere for the next nine months.

The reason: Escudero's wife, Christine Hernandez, is pregnant with twins.

"Twins at 13 weeks on the way," Escudero, 37, said, breaking into a smile as he confirmed the good news to business editors and staff over dinner Thursday night. "They say it's good luck, I agree."

It's more than good luck, it's a blessing times two.

After being married for more than seven years, the twins will be the couple's first. Christine, 33, who had an ectopic pregnancy in 2001, is due to give birth in October, the couple's first month.

This early, the couple are giddy with "informational" and "should" from names for their twins, way ahead of the ultrasound test which would tell them the babies' genders.

"My wife wants to name them Emilio and Ernesto, reasoning that by least that I (can) had their votes I would have enough time turning down Joaquin on the ba[l]

FIRST, A10

Nuns' nursing school: From robotic to caring

By Jocelyn R. Uy

SHE NEVER LEAVES A WORK SHE once, without giving her patients a bright smile or a comforting pat.

A nurse for almost half her life, Sabina Berne, 47, is convinced that relief for the sick often comes, not in the form of a bitter pill, but in simple acts of kindness.

Berne observes that younger nurses are slowly losing sight of the essence of the nursing profession, now that the United States and other First World countries have opened their doors to more Filipino health workers. With the fixation on the "American dream," some nurses have become "robots" in a service-oriented career, she says.

And this is one malady that the nuns running the College of the Holy Spirit (CHS) in Mendiola, Manila, wish to "heal"—the reason why there years ago

NURSES, A10

Japan waging, winning new battle in RP

By Fernando del Mundo

(Last of three parts)

MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY AFTER the end of World War II, Japan is waging a new war in the Philippines.

It is a lonely battle against poverty, its staging area is the government's agrarian reform program. By all accounts, the Japanese are winning, at least in the GO communities but they have reached.

Japan's intervention in agrarian re-

AGRARIAN REFORM
T-TEAM Report

form began in 1990 when then President Fidel V. Ramos sought the assistance of Tokyo in a determined bid to pump life into the flagging program.

President Gloria Arroyo had launched the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, or the CARP law of 1988, two years after the People Power revolution that ousted the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

It was then touted as the centerpiece of an ambitious initiative to wrench peasant farmers from poverty, remove inequality in land tenure, deliver economic and make the largely feudal countryside the locus of agricultural investments and economic growth.

Aquino allocated P50 billion for CARP's implementation for 15 years. Financing was to come from the disposal by the Asset Privatization Trust of "non-performing" government enterprises and plundered Marcos wealth that the Presidential Commission on Good Government would recover.

The war later extended for another 10 years, ending in June 2008. In addition,

JAPAN, A14

FIRST VOTES CAST
as Iranian chooses president in the country's hardest fought presidential election in years.
WORLD / A25

PROCTER
and Gamble Philippines executive unwounds his life.
SUNDAY BIZ / B1

Randy David: The charismatic cleric
running for governor of Pampanga assumes that the only antidote to cash is conscience. Given the political realities of that province today, perhaps he is right.
OPINION / A13

A1 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2007

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Rain begins today and Monday; showers and thunderstorms this weekend; temperatures and thunderstorms. Up to 10 mm of rain will partly cause flashfloods and landslides in Metro Manila.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with rain	Cotabato	Cloudy with rain
Baguio	Cloudy with rain	Davao	Cloudy with rain
Tagaytay	Cloudy with rain	Zamboanga	Cloudy with rain
Laoag	Cloudy with rain	Tacloban	Cloudy with rain
Legazpi	Cloudy with rain	Puerto Princesa	Cloudy with rain
Naga	Cloudy with rain	Iloilo	Cloudy with rain
Cagayan	Cloudy with rain	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with rain
Dipolog	Cloudy with rain	Surigao	Cloudy with rain

Soldiers: We were told to vote for gov't bets

By Ferdinand G. Zosa, Inquirer Mindanao, and Juan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

MATI, DAVAO ORIENTAL—ARMY SOLDIERS and militiamen assigned here and in the towns of Lupon, Banaybanay, San Isidro and Caraga yesterday claimed they were instructed to vote for pro-administration candidates and for party-list groups identified with the government in the absentee voting for military personnel.

"Our commanders here ordered us not to vote for anybody except for those running under the administration. We were also ordered to vote for party-list groups not identified with the communists," said a soldier who declined to be identified.

Two other soldiers confirmed the "instruction" from their commanders.

But other soldiers, who had earlier agreed to talk to the Inquirer, backed out when an unidentified officer told them to stay away from reporters.

Senior military officials were not around to clarify the alleged order, but a junior officer denied there was such an instruction.

Lt. Richard Maraja, commanding officer of Bravo Company of the 72nd Infantry Battalion, said soldiers and militiamen were free to vote for candidates and party-list groups of their choosing.

"Sir, there is no such thing as an instruction," he said.

During the early hours of the local absentee voting, the balloting was held at the hall of the house of ombudsman Gov. Hilario Davide III. Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, despite protests from election officials.

Soldiers prevented the boycott from taking photos of the balloting, saying they were just following orders from their superiors.

"Why at the hall of Ate Boots? Sige, kasi Mayo ito eh," a soldier, who is rooting for the vice governor's reelection, said.

But Davidson Tambuang, director of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) in Southern Mindanao, said there was nothing wrong with conducting the balloting behind Palma Gil's house.

"Because local candidates are not included in the local absentee voting, it's no issue for comelec. No local candidates will be included, so therefore it is an appropriate place for voting," Tambuang told the Inquirer.

The voting in the hall of Palma Gil's house was stopped but resumed around 11 a.m. inside a military detachment in Barangay Mayo.

"We had to change the voting venue because there were hundreds of our soldiers here, the sons of Caraga, who want to participate in the local absentee voting. We find this place (detachment in Barangay Mayo) appropriate, especially for soldiers who come from Caraga town. Sa Cotabato city naman, ang mga sundalo ay sa Camp Siongco," Tambuang said.

Comelec-Caraga election officer Atty. Ma. Lourdes Sagun said she was not informed about the change in venue.

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Comelec-Caraga election officer Atty. Ma. Lourdes Sagun said she was not informed about the change in venue.

Hired cost soldiers assigned in the towns of Banaybanay, Lupon and Mati in protocol host because we had changed the voting venue," Moreja said.

He said the result of the voting, which was participated in by more than 300 soldiers and militiamen, will be sent to the Comelec office in Manila by mail.

In 101, Committee Sur, 3,189 Army soldiers of the 9th Infantry Division, the counterinsurgency unit assigned in the six provinces of Bicol, have cast their votes for accredited here and party-list groups.

Lt. Col. Alex Luna, civil military affairs and division spokesperson, said the election held at the Army headquarters at Camp Elias Angeles was supervised by unit commanders.

Luna said the Comelec had instructed on Brig. Gen. Ronnie Quagay, the commanding general of the unit, the authority to supervise the election, just like the authorities of the chairs of the Board of Election Canvassers in polling places.

GMA nags PNP chief to stop poll violence

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

ALARMED BY THE NUMBER OF violent incidents related to the May 14 elections, President Macapagal-Arroyo reminded and she had been "nagging" Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon to take more steps to prevent the results of the elections.

"During this election period, we pray that violence will not increase towards election day," Ms Arroyo said in a speech at the 1st Tripartite Convention of the Philippine Association of Private and Personnel Agency Operators Inc. (Pasipa) and the Philippine Association of Reorganized Arms by Training Schools Inc. (Parmsi).

The President said she had been breathing down Calderon's neck in the matter of election violence.

"Kaya parating nasa likod ako, parati kong sinasabi kay General Calderon, mag-concentrate, magsasabing ayaw ng mag-eleksyon ng barilang ayaw (implanted) ang mga bandido, ang taong bayan ay ang mga dapat ng magkaroon (That's why I am always at his back nagging General Calderon trying, taking him steps to protect the candidates, the electorate and their votes)," the Arroyo said, the audience that included Calderon, military officers and Interior Undersecretary Marina Tuquero.

Extra security guards

To thwart the usual last minute bids, the President called on the security agencies under Malacañan and Pasay to join the campaign to stop election violence.

"Together our efforts must be directed at reducing the violence, that is why I am asking the security agencies to help us ensure a peaceful election," she said.

Perlpas has 2,000 security agencies under its wing with about 450,000 security guards.

The President had earlier called on the Armed Forces of the Philippines to help the PNP set up checkpoints.

The AFP had been requested to ensure election code officer some 50 guards were tasked on the alleged manipulation of the 2004 presidential election counter Mr Arroyo's victory.

Bloodiest day

The President's profiling of Calderon came after 11 people were gunned down on Friday in various parts of Luzon in what was dubbed the bloodiest day of the campaign.

Six supporters and relatives of Mayor Cecilia Jane of Lagayan, Ilocos, were killed when gunmen opened fire on her vehicle. Incumbent Mayor Abo, deputy of Dolorad Mendoza was slaughtered by unidentified assassins while she killed two of her bodyguards, while a police officer running for councilor in Albay was shot dead.

Peaceful, credible

In Bulacan, spotlight between soldiers and the bodyguards of Bernie Mayor Eduardo Villarosa, a son of evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva, resulted in the death of a soldier.

But President said the May 14 elections must not only be peaceful but credible.

"The political process is just as important as the political outcome. And we can assure you the elections will be democratic and the true will of the people will prevail," she said.

"Every election is a test of democracy and we will do everything to pass that test," she said. "Together we can show the world that Filipino elites on a democratic system based on free choice."

Palace: Gringo got, gave nothing at meet

By Jobbi Labog-Javellana

NOTHING WAS OFFERED AND nothing was given.

That is how President Macapagal-Arroyo and Malacañang officials yesterday characterized her meeting with accused coup plotter and independent congressional candidate Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan at the Palace Thursday night.

"We will release the letter that he gave [me]," Ms Arroyo replied when asked about her meeting with the former senator and military officer, after she addressed the convention of security agencies in a Pasay City hotel yesterday.

The President did not respond to a question on whether the meeting signaled a reconciliation with Honasan, who made accusations of misconduct in the failed Oakwood mutiny of 2003 and then aborted coup d'etat in February 2006.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye confirmed the President met with Honasan at 10 p.m. on Thursday.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, whom Honasan considers to be his mentor, arranged the meeting which included Honasan's son Kim.

Kim had been leading the reconciliation campaign for his father while the latter was in detention on the mutiny charges up to two weeks ago when he was released on bail.

Honasan had earlier disclosed the letter, the President told Honasan: "If you say and believe you are innocent, then you should follow the process and prove your innocence in court."

Presidential political adviser Ismael Cimatu denied Honasan will be included in the administration party ticket or given any form of support in his campaign as an independent.

"There were no deals, nakwalit or concessions and no proposals or offers," Cimatu said. "Cong Honasan is not part of the administration ticket and the administration candidates will not allow the substitution of any 70 candidate on any of its sample ballots (that are) by non-acceptable by millions nationwide."

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Who bugged Cory? Too many keys stump police

By Jasmenne I. Andrade

THE NUMBER OF POSSIBLE SUSPECTS IN the bugging of former President Corazon Aquino's telephone keeps growing.

Chief Supt. Leon Rosario of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit admitted the police were having difficulty narrowing down search for the culprit because too many people apparently had access to the Philippine Long Distance Telephone switch box in front of Aquino's residence on Times Street in Quezon City.

"Many people had keys to the box, from former contractors and ex-PLDT employees had keys. Anyone of those people could have placed the wiretapping device inside the box," Rosario said of the Inquirer on Friday.

Apart from the number of keys floating around, the keys to the switch box was "generic."

"One key could open all the PLDT boxes," Rosario said.

CIDU Senior Insp. Jun Bautista said police had taken the statements of three PLDT employees, including the Grace Park Business Zone repairman who found the "crude" wiretapping device inside of blue wire, a grayish telephone and a cassette tape recorder.

Bautista said the employees were statements of how the wiretapping device was found and the company's standard operating procedure in such cases.

"They gave us pictures showing the device attached to the telephone line but there was no one who could tell us where the box was last opened and who opened it," he said.

Asked what the cassette tape contained, Bautista said, "What we heard so far were conversations between two women discussing supposedly personal matters that only they could understand because we could not understand what they were talking about."

Comelec says 'Digs' guilty of snatching ballots

CORADO CITY—The Commission on Elections (Comelec) en banc has found former Representative "Big" Dibagulen guilty of ballot-snatching during the May 2004 polls.

In a 12-page resolution dated April 10, the Comelec directed the Department of Justice to file charges against Dibagulen for violation of the Omnibus Election Code, according to Jaime Antonio, Comelec director for election information.

Pilak Dibagulen, who gained notoriety after his "shut up, shut up" outburst in the House of Representatives during the canvassing of votes after the 2004 elections, was found guilty. He will be facing one criminal and the poll body of a similar charge.

Same offense

Emeline Adano-Tamano, who lost to the city's electoral race in 2004, was also charged with the same offense. But Antonio did not say if Tamano was found guilty.

Antonio said the case stemmed when Evelyn ng Bagbalatong Bikker (EBB) supporters led by Dibagulen and Tamano "grabbed and took possession by force of three ballot boxes containing votes for the city.

He said Dibagulen, who was then a mayoralty candidate, and his supporters positively and deliberately took the three ballot boxes in the early hours of the canvassing at the Sangguniang Bulusanod building here, where the votes were supposed to be canvassed.

'Doctored' ballots

Dibagulen and his supporters claimed the ballot boxes contained "doctored ballots" in favor of Mayor Machiavelli Seres.

Tamano ran under the Lakas coalition against Tamano, while Dibagulen ran as an Independent but he (Dibagulen) said that he (he campaigned not for Bailonal but "for votes).

Seres defeated Tamano while Bai Sendig won. Dibagulen lost and he accuses the spokesperson of elected Provincial Joseph Estrada.

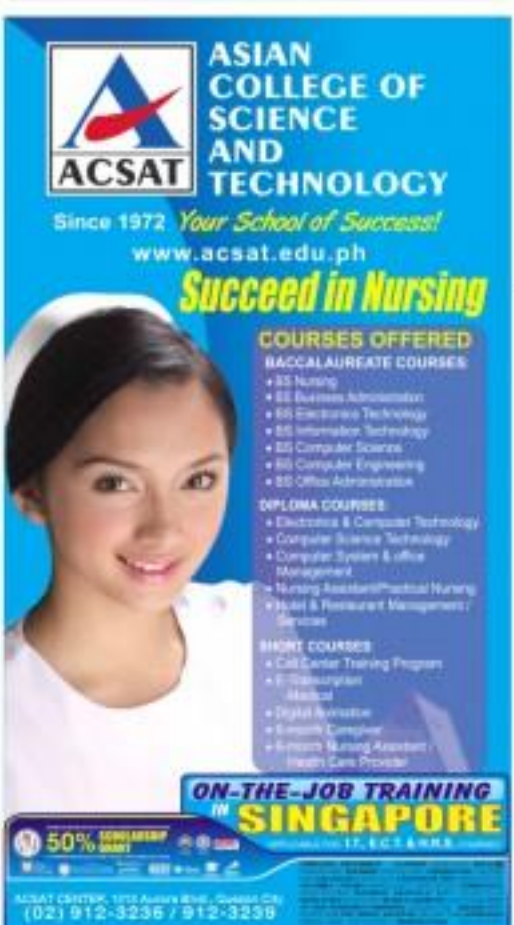
He is now running for Congress in the separate Catanduanes City and Sharif Aubaran provinces, which was carved out of the former district in Magindanao.

Unlawful

The ballot-switching incident had declared the canvassing.

"It shall be unlawful for any person to delay, obstruct, impede or prevent through force, violence, coercion, intimidation or by any means which obstructs canvass, The intentional of the election returns or to take away, destroy, mutilate, destroy, deface or mutilate or substitute the election returns or to violate the right of the electors," Antonio said, quoting a provision of the Election Code, Jaime Antonio Madrona, Inquirer Mindanao

HECTIC
As the campaign period nears its final week and candidates' sorties get intense, Opposition senatorial candidate Santa Barbara returns to the bailiwicks of her late husband, Sen. and Education Secretary Raul Roco of Camarines Sur for some last-minute flesh pressing. Also present "da Tribune in the Countryside" is Tigaw area.



Japan waging, winning new battle in RP

Front page A1

ŞAB was to go up to P5 billion from the national budget.

Under the Aquino blueprint, around 70 percent of the annual allocation were to support services; the other 30 percent bankrolled acquisition.

But inefficiency, schooling and dealing and corruption hobbled the program from the start. It also halted many accreditation analysts.

It was a testament to the program's lack of direction that five secretaries were in and out of the Department of Agrarian Reform during the time of Aquino, who herself comes from a family that owns one of the Philippines' largest sugar haciendas.

Loophole, corruption

Aquino's family was the first beneficiary of what critics say is a legal loophole in the CARP law that allows corporate owners such as sugarcane owners of stock in lieu of outright land distribution.

One year into the program, DAR purchased for P62.7 million the remote 3,887-hectare Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac from the embattled Cojuangco-Peñalosa (Cojuangco-Aquino) clan was originally worth P1 billion. The Supreme Court subsequently concluded the sale after the Land Bank of the Philippines balked and refused to pay up.

When Ramos came in, his administration reversed the Aquino formula, spending 70 percent of the CARP budget to buy lands and using the other 30 percent for support services.

The Ramos administration also tapped foreign funding.

Tokyo was first to respond to the Philippine request, impressed that agrarian reform was being pursued in a democratic setting, unlike in Japan, where the program was undertaken by American occupation forces following its defeat during World War II.

Only 1.7 million hectares of land were redistributed in Japan in the post-war years. In contrast, 8.7 million ha of private estates were being purchased and awarded to tenant tillers in the Philippines when the Japanese came in.

Under CARP, recipients were to organize themselves into cooperatives to receive credit and farm inputs. But in a way of their undertaking, funding was lacking, finance of roadblocks and headlocks to original owners were rife. Farmers were pushing their claims back on.

Decline in poverty incidence

But DAR surveys (the closest) that for 1988 and 2000 poverty incidence among beneficiaries of land reform with appropriate support declined from 47.6 to 45.2 percent. In contrast, poor nonbeneficiary households rose from 33.1 percent in 1988 to 38.4 percent in 2000.

A team from Japan's Overseas Development Institution (ODA) came a year after Kaisei people at DAR formed program beneficiaries into groups called Agrarian Reform Communities (ARC) from one or a cluster of barangays. Each ARC has anywhere from 300 to 1,000 members.

The objectives were to turn the ARCs into viable, organized, self-reliant and productive units introducing resources for their collective benefit.

ODA conducted feasibility studies and posted two Japanese technicians to DAR—irrigation engineer Yuhei Kamimoto, 54, and agronomist Yuko Ishiguchi, 33, to supervise the ARCs. The two have stayed in the Philippines since the project began in 1999, assuring continuity in its execution and monitoring.

Using the ODA loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), DAR formed the Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project (ARISP) to build irrigation systems, farm-to-market roads and post-harvest facilities such as solar dryers and warehouses.

Meticulous planning

In a candidate move, JBIC set up the Rural Partners and Agrarian Reform Support Credit Project, or RARCP, not another in a multitude of alphabet soup acronyms that simply illustrate the meticulous planning, implementation, monitoring and record-keeping that are the hallmarks of Japanese success stories.

Japan launched its six-year ARISP I as a pilot project in 1998. In '99 of the 1,798 ARCs that DAR had organized nationwide, ARISP II is winding down successfully in 80 ARCs this month. ARISP III is in the works with a new component, the setting up of federations on top of the ARCs that will provide institutional support and technical and financial assistance.

Periodic assessments were made by independent experts from academe and participating nongovernmental organizations, in addition to frequent forays in the field by Kamimoto and Ishiguchi.

The Japanese introduced some step of doing things. Usually, infrastructure development is dictated from the top by local politicians.

'From down up'

"It's from down up in our case," says Kamimoto. "It's from the people, the beneficiaries come to us and request help in building irrigation or roads. We go out, examine the request, bring in the technicians."

On senior DAR official says some Congressmen had attempted to interfere in the Japanese endeavor, insisting that infrastructure be set up around their (not beyond reasonable) turf.

Three pilot ARCs in ARISP I were outwood at the end of the project. The results were dramatic, belying handsome claims that existing up land was not viable.

Independent studies commissioned by JBIC showed (in six funded projects in 98 ARCs):

- 5 to 10 percent increase in post-harvest losses and improvement in quality of rice.
- 40 percent or 14 million decrease in average travel time from the ARC to the market and a 50 percent decrease in average transport cost from P11.25/sack to P5.25 per piece.
- 20 percent decrease in transport fee per cavan of rice from P5.25 to P4.5.
- 7% percent increase in the average number of vehicles plying ARCs.

For institutional development component, surveys showed:

- 139 percent increase in membership from 7,662 to 9,150.
- 36 percent increase in capital buildup from P13.04 million to P17.79 million.
- 23 percent increase in savings mobilization, from P4.04 million to P4.98 million.

And top among income, the studies showed:

- In tarlac, increased by 28.61 percent in 17 ARCs from P80,878 to P78,293.
- In the Visayas, increased by 77.58 percent for five ARCs from P38, Tilves P45,530.

- In Mindanao in nine ARCs, up from P27,687 to P98,879.
- Overall, using 1990 prices, 31 ARCs enjoyed a 16.82 percent increase in real income from P65,741 to P94,775, exceeding targets.

Since 1995, the JBIC has provided the (160) projects approximately $258 million, roughly P12.3 billion.

More cooperators needed

Hiroshi Ingo, JBIC chief representative in Manila, says that the largest error isn't with the provision of only the basic infrastructure facilities.

"There is a need to incorporate other components such as agricultural technology and extension services, accessible and affordable capital and marketing support," he says.

Togo says JBIC is considering financing the third phase of ARISP beginning this year, that will include the additional components.

DAR says it has generated foreign support for 40 projects since 1992 totaling P40 billion. The biggest component of official development assistance came from Japan (20 percent) followed by the World Bank (20 percent), Asian Development Bank (17 percent), Spain (5 percent), European Union (3 percent), Belgium (2 percent) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (4 percent).

Ravadnos and Ingkiriotis, who hold office in DAR, are upbeat in spite of cultural obstacles at the grass roots.

For example, Ravadnos says it is tough to break the cycle of selling crops to middlemen. But this has come to do with more or no use and the need to resort to credit.

Political will

"The price of rice is highest during the planting season," he says. But upon harvest, farmers go to the middle men to sell their produce instead of storing rice in warehouses to be sold at peak prices. He says even a PE peso per cavan means a lot to the farmers.

Ravadnos is mapping out plans in Syria Isabela area to 54 provinces that will assist the agrarian communities.

Each program for each of the federations should be "nationalized," he says, citing cultural differences in each region.

"What's needed is a strong political will to make the concept work," says Ravadnos, who is engaged in regarding the communities. "I am optimistic," he says.

But the ARCs number only 1,500 and comprise only 14 percent of the farmer beneficiaries. Large numbers of them are far removed from assistance and the Japanese experience in the ARCs will have to be replicated on a massive scale to make an ultimate difference.

At least, the Japanese are showing the way.

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Candidate ...

Front page A1

accomplished businessman," Second Division presiding commissioner Florentino Tuason Jr. said in his decision.

Pasay City's congressional candidate Ricardo "Ding" Encarnacion, a former city government official, had sought to declare fellow candidate Edgardo Batista a nuisance candidate.

Tuason alleged that Edgardo, who also used the nickname "Ding" when he filed his COC, had no capacity to launch a city-wide campaign.

Not convincing

Although Edgardo said he had been using the nickname "Ding," the Comelec, in its decision, said Edgardo did not establish that he had been using the nickname for a long time.

Edgardo also said he could launch a campaign despite having an independent consultant, the Comelec said he was unable to prove that he had the logistics.

The poll body also said that Edgardo's assertion that he was an accomplished businessman was "not supported by the evidence at hand."

The Comelec also noted that Edgardo not only misspelled a word, but he also wrote the wrong address in his COC.

"No doubt, respondent is indeed a nuisance candidate as amply demonstrated by the above observations," the Comelec said in its decision.

"What is sad is that some hidden hand appears to be controlling these events and this commission cannot simply sit idly by and allow the situation to persist and result [in] the mockery of the electoral process," it added.

In its decision, the Comelec declared a nuisance candidate as someone whose candidacy "is perceived and filed to cause confusion among the electorate by the similarity of the names of the registered candidates or by admission."

It added that the presence of nuisance candidates "robs the electorate of their will and deprives them of their true choice, by totally clouding certain votes that should have been counted in favor of the candidates that the electorate wanted to vote for."

40 cases

The Comelec National Capital Region has recorded at least 40 cases filed against candidates in the metropolis. Of those, only the cases of Edgardo have been resolved.

There are other similar cases—seeking the disbarment of a candidate as a nuisance—pending before the Comelec. Candidates with the same surname or nicknames could result in confusion during the canvassing of votes.

There are also cases seeking the cancellation of COCs for grounds like misrepresentation of eligibility requirements.

There are also cases seeking for the disqualification of candidates because of alleged violations committed during the campaign, like vote-buying and illegal posting of campaign posters.

N. Luzon coop fends for itself

By Honey Lacuarena
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BOARDED LA UNION—THE latest boon in the agrarian reform community (ARC) called Pumbhang Yatay which roughly translates into "father's and" to Filipino, but it needs a fresh infusion of cash to keep it going.

This ARC is a 206-member farm cooperative that Japan has extended as a pilot project to demonstrate that newly proper farming and technical support farmers received away from their landlords under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) will stand on their feet.

Pumbhang Yatay was derived from the six villages of Bimmotu—Pamay, Gabaoid, Sibbeet, Nangalisan, Bangbangcag and Tanglag. It was formed in 1998 to provide a working example of a people's managed agricultural community able to sustain itself.

It lived up to DARP's development objectives including new production with improved irrigation and use of high-yielding varieties, and raising incomes of the ARC members.

In 2002, Pumbhang Yatay was cited by international experts as the country's best ARC for its accomplishments.

No follow through

But the community was not able to follow through.

The Land Bank of the Philippines has not approved a loan of P200,000 to get the loan, the ARC has to show that its members are committed to the project and demonstrate that they would be able to pay the loan, which is granted on goodwill.

The ARC's, after initial support, there must be a demonstration of its ability to become self-reliant.

But Pumbhang Yatay appears to have turned on its heels.

LOAN DUE

Balbinito Carbonell Jr., who chaired Pumbhang Yatay when it received acclaim, has developed his own method for producing hybrid rice, which has increased yields to more than 6 tons/hectare. It realized that the six barangays have the ripe granary of the town.

DBP enlisted Pumbhang Yatay for its Agusan-funded Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project (ARISP) I to advance the valuable development strategies for provincial farms.

Carbonell says the project's main goal was to enhance production and augment farm earnings by subsidizing or consolidating funding for their irrigation requirements, post-harvest facilities and farm-to-market roads.

Bayanni Nozawa, a faculty member of Aoba University, was impressed by Pumbhang Yatay's farm proceeds when he analyzed the impact of MOFF 1 on La Union in 2002.

Increased palay yield

Nozawa documented a substantial increase in the cooperative's palay yield per hectare, after the cooperative raised the community's water supply tied over the town's farmers adopted their fields to high yielding rice varieties. The Subic produced 4.66 metric tons of rice per hectare, according to DAR records. The national average rate yield is roughly two per ha.

The Japanese expert says Pumbhang Yatay's widespread yield led to increases in cut-loan income."

"Generally speaking, the initial conditions of the La Union ARISP agrarian reform community were favorable," Nozawa's report says.

Among this period, Carbonell says Pumbhang Yatay enjoyed quality and high rice crop yield, enough rice supply for the farmers' families and even surplus to sell to a neighboring town's market.

The best problems would have helped Pumbhang Yatay extend its good fortune, he says.

Planting expenses

He says a farmer invests at least P15,000 on each hectare each time he plants the irrigation rice variety. But purchasing hybrid rice requires the farmer P30,000 because planting thrives only requires a set of procedures.

The cooperative also asked the local government to help the farmers build a palay-washing center and a processing zone. The pledges they got were never fulfilled, Carbonell says.

Some 200 Pumbhang Yatay's members have threatened to leave the cooperative because of government's failed promises. But he says the farmers actually proved that they could manage their farms without government help.

Carbonell's hybrid rice innovation, for example, could bring back some attention to the small farming community, Nozawa says. With a report from Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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Tambidao farmers show way to success

By Cristina Arzadon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO, ILOCOS NORTE—THE Tambidao Multipurpose Cooperative has come a long way from its beginnings as a farmers' group pooling its meager assets in the village through its servant (variety) store in 1990.

The cooperative, named after its village, pooled the resources of its 13 members to raise the vegetables in their store.

When the store grew the members raised their contributions to shore up the loan it had to survive, put up a rice mill, now one of the busiest milling areas in this town.

It was only in 1994, however, when the cooperative started expanding their services through the Department of Agrarian Reform's agrarian reform communities' development project (DAR-ARCDP).

The six-year project, funded by the World Bank, is part of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's commitment to make agricultural economies like The Philippines equally stable as industrial economies.

Gernador Albano, DAR's information officer here, says the program's beneficiaries are farmers' organizations that have reached an acceptable level of maturity and are capable of setting up sufficient funds or matching fund allocations with labor equity.

"The department tapped existing cooperatives which are capable of embracing government interventions and meeting the criteria," Albano said.

Technical, financial aid

Mindful of the cooperative's potentials and willingness to participate in the project, DAR identified the Tambidao cooperative as a recipient of technical and financial assistance ranging from livelihood project planning, screening of financial and technical resources, delivery of farm extension services, and rural infrastructures such as potable water system, bridge and farm-to-market roads.

The villages of Bantuan and Nambaran were chosen to work with the Tambidao cooperative to form the Pasura Juken from the initials of the villages' agrarian reform community (ARC) respectively Japan.

Lucinda Agustin, a municipal agrarian reform officer, said the Pasura agrarian community has first received support in agriculture and enterprise development, crop planting methods and infrastructure systems.

She said the three villages were selected as an ARC for having a large number of agrarian reform beneficiaries and household agreements under the department's land distribution system.

Reinventing community

"We always encourage the Pasura agrarian community as a success story for having reinvented itself from a generally subsistence economy to a commercial one," she said.

The Pasura community is using five farm-to-market roads, a potable water system, irrigation systems and an irrigation system.

Pauline Sisma, one of Tambidao cooperative's officials, said their assets now stand at P1.8 million after operating with a capital of P150,000 when it started with a consumers' store and rice mill.

The cooperative is engaged in palay trading and offers a milling service to its 328 members.

The cooperative's other assets include a building, a warehouse, a solar dryer and other delivery equipment. It now owns a 720-square-meter lot where the rice mill stands.

It is also using a two-story building that serves as the cooperative's office and a storage space for its grains. The cooperative plans to free the ground floor to house a bigger merchandising store.

Business training

The building was constructed out of a nearly P1-million grant from the DAR. The cooperative matched the project with labor services from its members.

Dizon said the members also availed of a loan facility from the Land Bank of the Philippines in 1998 under the ARC program to buy 22 tanners/cars.

"We used to walk long seven-six of dirt road from our homes to the fields. Now, we can leave at home our own tricycles, which we paid in three years out of our earnings," he said.

Dizon said the cooperative has been following a sound management and operational system after going through technological and business training on the method of marketing, business advisory services and bookkeeping.

Community approach

Christopher Fajardo, provincial agrarian reform officer, said the program uses a community-oriented approach in rural development.

Fajardo took over as ARCDP provincial project director and now supervises the implementation of the project's second phase, which began last year and is progressive completion this year.

The department matched its land distribution component under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program with a delivery of support services and facilities to improve farm productivity and income.

Ilocos Norte was one of 18 provinces in the country whose ARCs were given funding support of more than P300 million from the more than $66 million World Bank financing package.

The projects were spread and completed in 2004 in the towns of Bacnotan, Bangui, Pasuquin, Pagudpud, Banna, Dumalneg, Paoay, Burgos, Currimao, Nueva, Pinili, Solsona, Carasi, Dingras, Piddig, Marcos, Sarrat, Laoag City and Batac.

The project's first phase was completed under the term of former ARCDP project director, Mildred Sison, who is now assigned at the DAR regional office.

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Inquirer teaches kids to love reading

THE INQUIRER YESTERDAY LAUNCHED a program dubbed "Inquirer Read-Along" in hopes would teach children to love to read.

To be held twice a month, the program gathers children aged 7 to 13 for a story-reading session with celebrities and fa-

...house rom models for the youth.

Singer-actress Maxilyn Reyneo, the storyteller in the DZRH-7 children's show, "Hiya Inquirer at Lola Inquirer," kicked off the program.

She read "Ang Batikuring Ko...nsula sa Mahal na Ilog" to an au-

...ilt-filled audience of kids and parents at the Inquirer library.

The story is included in the book, "Ang Mga Inquirer ni Lola Inquirer," published by Anvil Publishing Inc.

"I grew up reading komiks and short stories," Reyneo said. "I learned a lot from reading."

The busy mother of two said she encourages her own young boys to read.

"Take your favorite story children books

...nto a source of good values," she said.

Jessica Inocencio and writer Ruth Esmero gave the children tips on how to read. The kids also took turns reading aloud parts of the same seven issue of Z which featured an editorial-writing.

Last year, it won the "Outstanding Children's Newspaper Section" award for the fifth consecutive time since the Unicef and the Philippine Press Institute started the child-friendly press awards in 2002.

...ill, which comes out with the Sunday issue of the Inquirer, has been christened to the Hall of Fame.

"We learned a lot and enjoyed the session," said 9-year-old Jessica de la Cruz, who came all the way from Antipolo with her 12-year-old sister, Mara Jo. "My only lesson we lost reading and listening to stories," she said.

Edwin Sarmiento, 42, brought his 6-year-old son Mark Gregor, who usually spends Saturday mornings playing Nintendo. "I want my son to develop the habit of reading. I also want him to meet new friends," he said. "I really appreciate the program."

The next Inquirer Read-Along will be on Mar 26 from 10 to 11 a.m. Guest storyteller will be Mikaela Inez Pudong, who made history when she graduated summa cum laude from the University of the Philippines at the age of 10.

Interested parents may contact Ellen Caparas or Girlie Ortiver at 897-8898, local 329. Stories can be downloaded from the Internet. Inquirer Research

FOR THE RECORD

Over the past 20 years, Senator Edgardo J. Angara's conscientious work in the Philippine Senate has benefited various sectors all over the country.

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Significant bills he authored have been passed into law and improved the lives of countless Filipinos, especially in the fields of Education, Health, Agriculture, Business and Finance, Culture, Environment, and Science and Technology.

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Corrections

IN THE MAY 1 ISSUE, a front-page caption in the photo showing the observance of World Press Freedom Day erroneously stated that the names in the photo were those of "journalists who fell in the night of martial rule." The names were those of slain journalists in the post-martial law era—not during martial rule.

In the same issue, a front-page article—"911 ambassador expresses shock over the gun case"—misidentified the name of the Bulacan chapter of the Kilusang Magtulungan ng Pilipinas. The Bulacan chapter of KMP is Alyansang Magtulungan ng Bulakeño—not Pilipinas.

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Napocor vows adequate power after Bicol suffers outages

By Abigail L. Ho

TO ASSUAGE FEARS of power outages on Election Day, particularly during the counting, the National Power Corp. assured Bicol residents that there would be an adequate supply of electricity during the polls and on the days the votes will be counted.

But with a few days left before the election, some parts of Bicol, particularly Sorsogon, were still reported having power outages.

Former Sorsogon Governor Raul Lee, a candidate for the lower House, said the Bicol region had been experiencing brownouts lasting two to three hours a day since May 1.

In a statement, Lee said he received reports of the brownouts in the coastal towns of Sorsogon province.

Lee said the brownouts in the coastal towns of Sorsogon province, along those in the Bicol region, have affected the operations of some business establishments.

Lee said he received reports that

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By Abigail L. Ho

STARTING TODAY, GASOLINE STATIONS should begin selling only the mandated one percent coco (coconut) blend, with diesel prices remaining unchanged.

This is the first phase of the implementation of the Biofuels Act of 2006.

The Department of Energy said it did not expect any problems.

"We anticipate a very smooth implementation of the Biofuels Act starting May 6. The stakeholders, including the oil companies, have been very supportive of the law, as we see to it that we fit its implementation," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said.

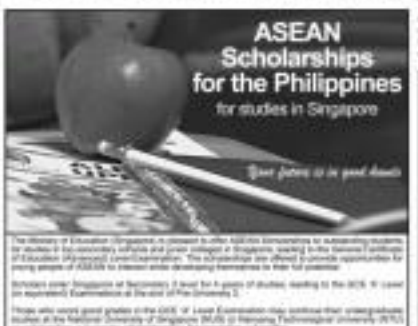
Lotilla said that the DOE would initially be "a little flexible" in allowing small dealers to finish off any remaining stock of unblended diesel.

Under the Biofuels Act, which became law in February, all diesel fuel vehicles should use a minimum one-percent biodiesel blend within three months after the effectivity of the law. Gasoline, on the other hand, should have at least a five-percent ethanol blend within two years of the law's effectivity.

The move is expected to reduce harmful vehicle emissions that are blamed for the rising rate of respiratory diseases and global warming. Studies show that a one-percent blend of soybean methylester (SME) or coco biodiesel helps reduce engine heat fuel more efficiently, reducing smoke-belching by 40 to 77 percent.

The one-percent blend will rise to two percent for biodiesel after two years, and to at least 10 percent for bioethanol after four years.

"Oil companies are mandated to implement the mandated blend under the law. However, oil companies have assured us that diesel prices will not increase due to the implementation of the Biofuels Law," Lotilla said.



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2. The DepED, through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) of the Division of Zamboanga City now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Supply and Delivery of School Furniture for Elementary schools under this project, namely: Industrial arts, Business, guidance and faculty rooms of the following schools: **Pasonanca NHS-San Pedro Annex, San Antonio NHS, Tiby NHS-Palomino Annex, Sunlibay NHS, Piyao NHS-Bolawan Annex, Piyao NHS, Olutanga NHS, Ingubran NHS-Ingubran Annex, Ingubran NHS-Sinubung Annex, Malangas NHS, Ipil NHS, Mabuhay NHS-Annex, Buenavi NHS-Annex, Mercedes NHS, Lutk Sabu NHS and Manalong Annex.**

3. Bidders are required to submit their bids for the complete quantities of all the furniture items contained for the respective schools listed in paragraph 2 above. Partial bids or bids for incomplete schools shall not be considered.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain complete information about the proposed project upon submission of a letter of intent and acquire the bidding documents from the **SEDIP Division Office (4th Jet, Zamboanga Village) with telefax number: (062) 334-5462.**

5. Bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting **May 9, 2007 until 5:00 P.M. of May 16, 2007** upon payment of the DepED Division Office Cashier of a non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).**

6. Sealed bids, together with the bid security of equivalent percentage to this shall be received as specified in ITB 17 page 5 of the Instruction to Bidders, must be delivered to the Division Office on **May 16, 2007 not later than 10:00 A.M.** Late bids will be opened immediately for reading in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.

7. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held at the address indicated in Paragraph 4 on **May 10, 2007 at 10:00 A.M.**

8. The Division BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality therein and award the furniture packages in one or more lots/s.

(Sgd.) GLORIA P. ZAMORA
BAC Chairman

Mactan Economic Zone

PEZA Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Contract for the Supply and Delivery of Various Electrical Equipment and Supplies for Mactan Economic Zone

1. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) through its Corporate Operating Budget for the CY 2007 has duly accepted the sum of P5,000,000.00 being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to appropriate under this contract for the above-stated project. Bidders are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit their bids pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act (R.A.) 9184 otherwise known as the Bid Law.

2. The PEZA now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs), certified copy of PhilGEPS Certificate of Registration and proof of ownership and the use of PEZA duly accredited bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of the following:

	ITEMS	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE (Php)
A.	BILLING METER	10 units	10,000.00
	Additional Billing Meters		
B.	POWER EQUIPMENT AND DEVICES		10,000.00
	Overhead Transformer, 10 KVA	5 units	2,000,000.00
	Overhead Transformer, 15 KVA	5 units	2,000,000.00
	Overhead Transformer, 25 KVA	5 units	2,000,000.00
	Overhead Transformer, 37.5 KVA	5 units	2,000,000.00
	Overhead Transformer, 50 KVA	5 units	2,000,000.00
C.	TOOLS AND SUPPLIES		10,000.00
	Barricade	10 units	10,000.00
	Safety Helmet	10 units	10,000.00
	Safety Shoes	10 units	10,000.00
	Safety Belt	10 units	10,000.00
D.	TEST EQUIPMENT		10,000.00
	Digital Multimeter	1 unit	10,000.00
		TOTAL	10,000.00

3. Bidders should have completed a single contract that is similar to the contract to be bid, except that contracts for civil works or physical infrastructure will not be considered similar unless they also have electrical components, equivalent to at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the PEZA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **7:30 AM to 5:00 PM as of May 2007 to 21 May 2007.**

5. Interested bidders must submit their LOIs, certified copy of their PhilGEPS Certificate of Registration and PEZA accreditation not later than **21 May 2007** at the address given below and must indicate the activity (ies) they intend to participate in. Only bidders who have been pre-qualified after the pre-qualification process shall be allowed to participate in the bidding.

6. The PEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on **28 June 2007** at **3:00 PM** at the address given below.

7. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before **2:00 PM** of **21 June 2007**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of cash, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit issued by a reputable bank or a bank guarantee confirmed by a reputable bank operating in the Philippines, in the amount of 2% of the ABC. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on **21 June 2007, 3:00 PM** at the address given below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

8. In case any of the above dates is declared as a non-working holiday, it will automatically be rescheduled to the next working day (same time).

9. The PEZA reserves the right to reject any bid, to waive any irregularity therein and to award the contract to the bidder it determines to be the most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) ERIC B. SUELO
BAC Chairman

Eight and Counting

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There's a reason why Convergys Corporation has been hailed as one of Fortune Magazine's Most Admired Companies for the past seven years.

As a global leader in providing the best customer care, human resources, and billing outsourcing services, the Cincinnati-based company has established a reputation as one of the pre-eminent players in the customer contact center industry. In addition to understanding the client needs, Convergys also makes it a point to understand the needs of its workforce. That's why Convergys offers its employees not only a well-compensated job but all the opportunities to grow both in career and personal development. The company offers the specialized training programs that build confidence among its employees to perform at a high level.

Of course, employees need offices, and fortunately, Convergys has a lot of them.

The first one

Convergys Enterprise Makati

Convergys' first site was opened in August 2001 during the peak of the contact center tidbits here in the Philippines, located at the 8th, 7th, and 11th floor of the Enterprise Center in Makati City. It's Convergys site served as a catalyst to everyone that Convergys was intent on making a tremendous impact on the fledgling contact center industry in the Philippines.

The company, however, did not put all its impact on a fancy new office. Every employee of Convergys worked tirelessly to establish the company as one of the premiere working environments in the country. Despite all the challenges they faced, the company endured and grew stronger. As a result, Convergys was able to generate more jobs for Filipinos, and in the process, directly affect the growth of the company in the Philippines.

It was becoming apparent that one contact center would not be enough to satisfy the increasing client demand. Or expanded capacity in the Philippines. This business demand, brought about by the success of the company in the country, also brought about the need for additional facilities.

Branching out

So, in September 2003, Convergys set up an office at the 24th to 28th floor of the Robinsons Equitable Tower at the Ortigas Center in Pasig City. The seven-storey-building beside Robinson's Galleria, became the second Convergys site in the country.

Taking cue from the old maxim "strike the iron while it's hot", Convergys quickly opened another site in the Philippines. Needing space for the company to conduct its employee trainings, the third site was established at the Insular Life Building, right across the Enterprise Center, home of the company's first site, on April 2004. The company occupies the 8th and 9th floor of the building, and unlike the first two sites, Convergys Insular site is not primarily a contact center. It was established to serve as the training center for all of the company's employees.

Convergys Alabang Corporate Center

Convergys Ortigas Makati

A lot of activity

As the company continued to grow, the latter months of 2004 proved to be one of the busiest times in Convergys' history here in the Philippines. In a span of four months, Convergys opened three more new sites, two of which were buildings exclusively built for the company.

Taking advantage of the rising business district in Alabang, Muntinlupa, Convergys opened a center at the Northgate Cyberzone in the Filinvest Corporate City in August 2004. The move was largely motivated by the company's desire to tap into the talent pool of people from nearby towns. People who didn't want to travel to Makati or the other centers were immediately drawn to the new center, located right in their neighborhood.

In October 2004, Convergys opened yet another site, this time at the PBCom Tower in Makati City, a stone's throw away from the other two Makati sites. The three Convergys' sites, situated so close to each other, served as a testament to how dedicated the company is in the Metro Manila area and to the Philippines.

Taking expansion further down south

In November 2004, just one month after opening the Convergys site at PBCom Tower, the company moved south to open Convergys' first contact center outside Metro Manila, a facility in Cebu.

The expansion to Cebu served as a testament to the company's commitment to hiring the best possible workforce. The decision to build a site outside Metro Manila was the perfect opportunity for the company to reach out to people who couldn't go to Metro Manila. The 5,500 we've one in Banawa, Cebu was successful from the start.

Two for '05

Seeing the opportunity in Quezon City, Convergys was quick to put a contract center in the heart of the fastest-growing city in the Philippines. In February 2005, Convergys opened its 6th site in Congressional Avenue, Quezon City. Occupying the 2nd to 5th floor of the Filinvest Centennial Center, Convergys was beginning to make its presence evident in all corners of Metro Manila.

The rapidity in which Convergys was able to open its contact centers was astounding. From April 2004 to February 2005, a span of 10 months, Convergys opened five sites.

Convergys Manila Bay Makati

Convergys Mid-Link Makati

Convergys Eastwood Quezon City

The 6-floor Convergys One Building located at Ayala Avenue, just down the road from the three other Convergys sites in Makati, was opened in December 2005. With a total floor area of 14,250 sqm, it is the biggest Convergys site in the Philippines.

Twice as nice in Cebu City

This May, Convergys is once again heading to Cebu to open another center. This time at the AmaTown IT Park in Lahug, Cebu. The company will be occupying the 11th & 12th Floor of the IT Building.

With the opening of the Convergys Anabron site, the company continues to broaden its reach and take in more and more of Cebu's finest talents. The Anabron site will also give people from neighboring provinces the opportunity to work for a world-class company.

Convergys believes in the Cebuano spirit. The laidback, yet passionate attitude Cebuanos have is always welcome at Convergys. Cebuanos are also known to be warm and accommodating, something that is a must when handling international calls.

By injecting a distinct Cebu flavor to the business process of Convergys, the company continues to prove without a shadow of a doubt that it will go to great lengths to give the best possible work force.

Convergys has been able to fill seven sites and one training center with outstanding employees and here's a tale but they won't have a difficult time filling up the eighth one. ■

Convergys Anabron Cebu

Convergys Abaknon IT Park, Cebu

First time father Chiz expecting twins in Oct.

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From page A1

ist," said Escudero, who is running for senator under the opposition banner. "But if my wife's poetry books were any gauge, I think they're going to be girls."

In an interview with Senator Jinggoy Estrada, just a few years ago, the congressman said he believed he would make a good father. "I like kids. I think I'd make a good dad, given the opportunity," he said in that interview.

Singer at Solo

Escudero, a University of the Philippines law graduate who took up his master's degree in international and comparative law at Georgetown University in Washington DC, and Christine Flores, a music major from the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music, were married in December 1999.

Escudero met Christine, a singer and stage actress, when she was performing in the Solo Hotel's Drama Lounge in 1994.

Christine, together with actress-Senator Ilocos, accompanied the congressman when he filed his certificate of candidacy with the Commission on Elections in late January. She has not joined her husband's campaign sorties since then to prepare for the twins' arrival.

Escudero has served three terms as congressman of Sorsogon's first district from 1998 to the present.

Former 'That's' member

In the past, Christine had been a ubiquitous presence in her husband's roadshows, even cradling the latter in his arms rally in Sorsogon while Escudero was busy speaking for municipal candidates. Presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. is the ticket's top bet.

"She sings very well. she used to sing before my speeches. She served me a lot of cadence lines," Escudero said, chuckling. He was clad in his trademark black shirt, denim pants and black boots.

"But I discovered something in my last campaign. We noticed that after she's done

CHRISTINE cased by her husband together with their wedding godmother, Senate Ilocos, when Chiz Escudero filed his certificate of candidacy for the Senate at the Comelec last January.

her number, people on the fringes would start to leave. So the next time around, we decided that I'd speak first, then she would sing. It worked," he recalled.

Christine was a former member of "That's Entertainment," an afternoon youth-oriented TV show hosted by Germon Moreno. She has appeared in musicals and stage plays of the New Music Voice Company and runs her own music school for children in Quezon City.

Agri putting up P2-B nat'l grains highway

From page A1

Why a dirt? Because these goods go through a series of middlemen and marketplace transfers before they reach the consumer markets of Metro Manila and large urban centers.

The high cost of bringing agricultural products to the final consumer hurts the country as a whole by stifling the productivity of a crucial sector—agriculture.

But the victims ultimately are the consumers who have to pay higher retail prices and the farmers who end up receiving only a tiny portion of the final price of their produce.

Bridging the gap

This is why the agriculture department, through the National Food Authority, plans to put up the new 2-P2 billion "national grains highway" that will link farm production areas to nearby major consumption centers.

According to Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, the grains highway would bridge the wide gap between farmgate costs and retail prices of basic food items.

The grains highway will also integrate—with rail lines, coastal and other transport systems to move agricultural products from production areas to selling centers, and resolve the problem of unreliable food supply and prices in the country's hard-to-reach and food-deficient communities, Yap said.

The "grains highway" will also directly link rice and corn production areas in those areas of the country that are isolated and prone to natural calamities.

According to Yap, this will involve the NFA's upgrading its warehouses, putting up grains silos and related post-harvest facilities and marketing support systems designed to reduce crop wastages and losses.

These facilities, which will form part of the grains highway will be set up in the 37 rice-producing and 33 corn-producing provinces, Yap said.

The country's main rice-growing regions are Mindanao and Central Luzon and the Cagayan Valley. Mindanao is the main producer of corn.

Post-harvest losses

"We will encourage farmers' cooperatives and other agricultural stakeholders to help farmland and build their own silos, which is a key factor in reducing post-harvest losses and boosting farm productivity," he said.

Post-harvest losses of corn alone are estimated at 15 percent of total harvest, mainly because of the lack of adequate drying and storage facilities.

Ronnie M. Villaruz, president of Philippine Maize Wholesalers Inc., said the grains highway was "really needed by farmers as it would drastically help improve quality of corn and significantly reduce post-harvest losses."

"Losses can be reduced to as low as two or even 1 percent from the current 15 to 20 percent," said Villaruz.

He said post-harvest losses eat up the bulk of farmers' revenues.

Mis said these losses are mainly attributed to the lack of post-harvest facilities, for the absence of sufficient drying equipment. For example, the country retains a high moisture content, which causes much damage, Villaruz said.

Logistic artery

Yap described the grains highway as a logistic artery aimed at efficiently moving, processing and storing food production to consumption areas.

With the grains highway in place, Yap said the NFA would be able to handle other commodities besides rice and corn, like high-value crops and root and poultry products that would generate more jobs and revenues and create new jobs.

The NFA, which grew out of the Marcos era National Grains Authority, is the agency responsible for ensuring the stability of the country's supply and price of the grain staples, rice and corn.

Philfoodex is the first organized national federation representing the core industry for members of farmers, producers, suppliers, processors and food processors.

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Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 AM of 18 May 2007. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stipulated in the Bidding Documents.

Bid opening shall be on 18 May 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the above address. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the time and address.

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders, in accordance with Section 41 of R.A. 9184 and its IRR. The SSS reserves the right to waive any minor deficiencies in the bid and to accept the bid which, in its judgment, will be most advantageous to the government.

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Metro pay hike seen by July

By Jocelyn Ablaig

THE WAGE BOARD IN METRO Manila has begun reviewing the P75-wage hike petition filed by the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, raising hopes of a minimum wage hike by the middle of the year.

President Bienvenido Arroyo, in her Labor Day speech, ordered all regional wage boards to look into the possibility of raising the current P200 minimum wage.

National Wage and Productivity Commission (NWPC) Executive Director Esther Garnace said the wage board for the National Capital Region has scheduled consultations with the labor sector on May 23 and with the employers sector on May 31. A public hearing is scheduled for June 14.

Based on the rules for minimum wage setting, the board should decide the matter within 30 days after the last public hearing, or by July. Garnace said.

Other regional wage boards are required to begin their deliberations to determine if and how much could be granted to workers based on prevailing socioeconomic conditions. The TUCP has filed petitions for a P75-wage hike in the Central Visayas and Davao regions.

Public hearings, however, are expected to be contentious because labor and labor groups like Kilusang Mayo Uno said they would insist on a legislated P125-wage hike.

"We assure the public that the boards nationwide are assessing the wage conditions in their respective areas and will come up with a decision that is acceptable and fair to both workers and employers," Ilarina said.

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HIGHEST-RATING CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAMS NATIONWIDE
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KATED K 28.2 %

Source: AGB-NMP National Urban TV Audience Measurement (NUTAM) - March 1st-31, 2007

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Who's in charge?

EDITORIAL

IT MAY BE, AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO Ermita reminded the public last week, that Archbishop Oscar Cruz is a known critic of President Macapagal-Arroyo. That doesn't mean, however, that for that very reason the latest criticism from the high-profile prelate and anti-jesting advocate should be characterized, or dismissed outright.

What did Cruz say exactly? "Frankly, the way the killings go on, from the extrajudicial killings and now the [election-related] killings, notwithstanding all the probes and the reports, the conclusion is that the Commander in Chief is no longer in command," he told the Inquirer. He also said he thought the President had been reduced to meeting "real pretenders" and ordering "ceremonial investigations."

No such thing, Ermita said the following day. "What they're saying—that the orders of the President are not being followed—is not true. She continues to be respected as the President and Commander in Chief, and that's exactly how things are." He added: "she acts as President and Commander in Chief to ensure that the greatest interest of the majority of our people is protected."

It doesn't help this administration's struggle with public skepticism that Ermita, himself a former general, is the most visible, most reliable executive secretary in the Republic's history. Doesn't the President already have a spokesman and press secretary to speak, regularly, for her? What is Ermita doing week in and week out, speaking for the entire administration?)

Even if true, however, Ermita's statement fails to account for the evidence we all see with our own eyes. The President has ordered the national police and even the armed services to run after the assassins, but the death toll from extrajudicial killings of leftist activists and troublesome journalists continues to rise. The President has ordered the national police and even the armed services to clamp down on private armies and on possible sources of poll violence, but the casualty lists from acts of election-related violence continue to lengthen. To appropriate the words of former Vice President Emmanuel Pelaez, in the aftermath of an assassination attempt on his life during the Marcos years: What is happening to our country, General?

The President gives an order—and nothing happens. Or rather, the same thing happens again and again: Last Thursday, for instance, was the bloodiest day of the election season.

It may be, as some of the President's critics say, that the Commander in Chief's orders are only for public consumption. Her orders, in their view, are issued merely to score political pogi points. These must, and were designed to meet, very short-term objectives: soothe European Union anxieties, deflect United Nations criticism, allay US embassy concerns. The long-term strategy remains the same, however: Her political survival depends on keeping the opposition off-balance, and that part of the public that may yet again take to the streets mobilized.

If this is in fact the case, then the President is playing a very dangerous game indeed—and former Senate President Jovito Salonga's warnings about the return of Marcos-style politics should be heeded as a prophesy that is already in the process of coming true.

It may also be, as some of the President's defenders say, that only a small group of rogue soldiers is actually responsible for the killings. Or—one hypothesis goes—it may be that this rogue group started out as special operations, but now has turned into a murderous genie that refuses to reenter the bottle. If that were the case, then it isn't only presidential and institutional complicity that is the problem, but incompetence too.

And we are back to the same chilling question: Who, really is in charge?

Archbishop Cruz, obviously with the alleged involvement of policemen and soldiers in the extrajudicial killings in mind, castigated the President for an essential passivity. "More than the national leadership telling the AFP and the Philippine National Police what to do, she simply accepts what they do," he said. Perhaps the point is not of that cursed bottle.

Publisher Isaac Nieto
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The real issue in the coming elections

SEPARATE OPINION

Raissa A. Cruz

MANY RIGHT-THINKING FILIPINOS BELIEVE that the coming elections will be most remembered for ordinary and regular selection of the officials in Congress and the next governments for the next three years. Properly explained, it will be an indirect but decisive referendum on the controversial administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Although she herself is not a candidate, the results of the voting next week will be a judgment on whether her political leadership deserves to be continued and extended or ripped by her loyal followers or denied really entrenched as demanded by her true critics.

The coming polls will be like the recent midterm elections in the United States where the voters turned the Republicans from control of both houses of the US Congress not solely because of the questionable conduct of some of their colleagues. The principal reason was the widespread dissatisfaction of the electorate with the performances and policies of President George W. Bush.

Today, as she is demonstrably unlikely his opponents, is despised by as many as 70 percent of the American people. He is particularly hated for the unwinding tragedy of the Iraq war that he started but cannot win or at least end with honour. His response in scoring the many domestic problems festering his country has also added to his still growing unpopularity.

It is the unenforceable position of her public last idol that President Arroyo is desperate to avoid. This is the reason she is particularly determined to cower the electorate for her own gains and her vanity as a party leader. She knows that the coming elections will decide her political fortunes and, by extension, the future of her relatives now clinging to her coattails.

Specially affected is her husband who, as a private citizen, has nevertheless assumed leadership and her Team Unity is suffering because of her unwelcome intrusion in its hardly concerning campaign. Composed of members' minions, rejected opportunities turned administration backers, and former or false reformers, Arroyo's loyalists have not considerably shifted to her, the answer must a doubted unless the election results are again falsified.

The problem of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's candidates is that her endorsements is like an albatross to them. Many of their newest picks that she for four hundred of preparing herself and reminding the voters of the many serious accusations against her. Revolving among these is Delta, Garci which remains unanswered although it keeps ringing like an insistent telephone.

Knowing that they cannot win on the merits, the administration spokesmen are resorting as usual to dirty tricks that have served them well before, in addition to Delta, Garci tactics, they are also flaunting unlimited possibles to unprincipled voters, suppressing the opposition of media, harassing critics, terrorizing opponents and hostile journalists, bribing constituencies with official "rewards," and advancing many other illicit operations.

Their principal goal is not to insure the victory of Team Unity and their candidates but the election of a congress that will be subservient to the President's every wish and kind officers. That is only a subjugate objective. The overriding purpose is to affirm, by hook or by crook, and more likely by crook, the defense leadership of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

It is under her mandate that the Philippines has been reduced to the most corrupt country in Asia, continues to be a nation of self-exiled domestics, remains hapless even in the centers of population, and is now internationally scorned for its rampant violation of human rights. This is the shabby record the people should bear in mind when they vote on May 14.

Missed call

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A SMALL BOY who ran with his mother to church.

During the homily, the priest kept asking the question, "What is a Christian?" each time prompting his/her to the pulpit.

Feeling nervous with the repeated question, the little boy whispered to his mother, "mama, do you know what a Christian is?"

"Yes, dear, just sit and listen," said the mother.

When the priest examined again "What is a Christian?" this time prompting even hard on the pulpit, the nervous boy jumped and cried: "Tell him Mama! Tell him!"

* * *

In today's Gospel (Jn. 13, 31-33), Jesus tells us clearly what a Christian is. "This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

We know what a Christian is. The problem is that we just sit still and do nothing about it. And to say, we are not sending the messages, we are not praising the persons, and we are not singing our song or "tell the world of His love."

* * *

All of us Christians should be busy campaigning for Christ. What have you done, what are you doing to spread Christ's love? "Go to the whole world and preach the Gospel to all creation," (Mk. 16,15). What have you contributed to this campaign based in terms of time, talents and resources? Have you talked about Him to other people? Have you proclaimed Him by your words and deeds? Has he been your life example? Do people have a decent picture of Christ because they see you?

* * *

We have to acknowledge the real, hard work and determination of politicians running for public office like this May, including their supporters. They leave no stone unturned, and their sons every and any means just to be known and get elected. For what? For public service, dear. If only we Christians had the same zeal and determination in our missionwhat God.

* * *

The Philippines is the only Christian country in this part of the world, but it does not show. Sure, there is much religiosity and tradition, but there is much selfishness and greed, much room for improvement. Instead of loving one another, we often kill one another, cheat one another, manipulate one another, use one another.

* * *

Isn't it about time you and I really made God's vision our vision, and His agenda our agenda in life? You find some people just leave God out of the picture until they encounter some crisis or more some tragedy in life. Our greatest regret and sadness will be when we get to heaven at the end of our lives, and we realize that we have never really known Him or never truly loved Him and never concretely served Him.

* * *

Don't run the most important call in your life—the call to love. The reason we fail to receive and then fail to respond to that most important call is that our line is busy with other calls, or we are not within the coverage area, or we deliberately refuse or bar this call in our lives.

* * *

Brother call me names and even write to the call to conversion. At any point of our lives, we must be open to a change of heart and conversion. A person, for example, who receives a call to serve in public affairs like a congressman or senator, for instance, has been given the opportunity to be instrument of God's love and compassion for the poor. He must be open, be receptive, and be willing to be used by God for the service of the poor. He must not be afraid to be used by God for the service of the poor. He must not be afraid to be used by God for the service of the poor. He must not be afraid

Another slap on the Comelec

WITH DUE RESPECT

Antonio V. Bautista Gualberto

THOUGH ALREADY REPUBLISHED IN 1998, 2001 and 2004, the party-list situation is still burdened by unnecessary controversies. These problems stem from the major role accorded by the Commission on Elections followed meticulously—so, indeed, it is that limited to—the two Supreme Court decisions (Ang Bagong Bayani-OFW Labor Party, Dec. 26, 2000), as well as the implementing resolution in the latter case dated June 26, 2001. I strongly favor two-decision and resolution.

Overturning the Comelec, Veterans Federation Party unsuccessfully interposed only three grounds: flexible ng Kinalaganga in Comelec (March 15, 2004), under which Comelec Acting Chairman S. Pamaran and COMC in Comelec (April 13, 2004, penned by Justice Prudencio J. Vitug). Three days ago, on May 3, the Supreme Court—speaking unanimously through Justice Conrado C. Sartor—dealt out the Comelec a new slap-down, consistent with the Ang Bagong Bayani ruling, it ordered the poll body to disclose immediately the names of the party-list nominees.

Significantly, in all three cases, the Court overturned the poll body. And yet, despite these embarrassing reversals, the Comelec still insisted on its own grossly erratic interpretations of the Constitution (Art. II, Sec. 26 and Art. IX) and the Party List Law (Republic Act 7941).

Consider this. During the 1998 elections, the Comelec proclaimed the winner of 0.51 party-list representative, in undisguised violation of Sec. 11 (b) of RA 7941 (Ang Bagong Bayani). Then, in 2001, by setting a minimum of 2 percent of the total valid votes cast for the party-list system were "qualified" to have a seat in the House of Representatives. (It, though only 11 of the 162 garnered the threshold 2 percent, all 12 were declared winners.

Disregarding the law "in disregarding, interpreting and circumventing the statutory provisions, the Comelec," said the Court in the Veterans case, "effectively arrogated unto itself what Congress failed expressly and wholly vested in the legislature. The task of the Comelec is to administer and enforce election related laws. It has no power to contravene or amend them." It cannot proceed to know better than Congress or the Supreme Court.

In the same case, the high tribunal categorically ordered a mathematical formula to determine the winners in the party-list elections. This step-by-step formula (which is detailed in the decision) was made by the Court after long and profound deliberations. Astoundingly, according to the Court, the Comelec—in spite Ang Bagong Bayani—"would have us believe that the party-list provisions of the Constitution and RA 7941 are nothing more than a play of dubious words, a mockery of solemn international agreements reflecting on the sense of people empowerment."

By unanimously re-acting, the Comelec is taking lessons (slaps) from the highest Supreme Court. Mr. Sartor decided either to defy the Comelec or follow the rule of law as all citizens and to obey all decisions and orders of the highest court even if it may disagree with the justices.

* * *

Comments or website at chr@antoniogualberto.com

Cebu surprises

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

DIN OUR WAY TO DINNER, WE FOUND OUR way blocked by a tall, black metal gate with a notorious devil sign that asked our drivers to "Scroll your loam if you want to enter."

Once parked, we found ourselves in a garden lit by torches, walking our way down a path lined with pebbles, tropical plants and tall rocks for Mayan drama. Reaching the bottom of the path, we found ourselves at dark wood, with dark wood tables and chairs, and Polynesian tiki statuary. There was even an open kitchen and, further away, an open-air patio with low-slung couches and low tables, sultry music spotlighted in the background, a small pool and a slice of beach. The night was so unexpected, we caught the females almost speechless before going to delight. Her husband, Klaus."

Located just a few minutes' drive away from Shangri-la Mactan, Abuca is a newly opened restaurant that is the brainchild of Klaus Hipp's two daughters, Christine and Sandra. Abuca is noted for its ribs, which is truly world-class since chef-owner Jason Hipp has checked in extensive experience helping out in high- fat hardcore "Klaus."

Located just a few minutes' drive away from Shangri-la Mactan, Abuca is a newly opened restaurant that is the brainchild of Klaus Hipp's two daughters, Christine and Sandra. Abuca is noted for its ribs, which is truly world-class since chef-owner Jason Hipp has checked in extensive experience helping out in high- fat hardcore "Klaus."

The night we went there, the place was full, and we sipped Tsantou beverages that fascinated, with their mixture of fruit juices, as "Your Lolay's spokesperson, and celebrating his birthday with a group of friends arrived in April.

Now Hipp and his wife Ana, who combines her famous Japanese and Australian heritage in a lovely, flawless package, came to found Abuca in to mull a compelling chefs.

* * *

JOSEPH: so as we were polishing off Jason's rich and delicious cuisine, Hipp told me that the last time she was at Abuca is a bar owned by Jason's sister, a native of Cebu who married Jason's uncle. After spending a few moments in the family's handsome home, Jason and his brother-in-law Philippines as a "spa and wellness" destination.

In the lounge, in Jason's Chelsea, Julie and I opted for the "Julie" package, which was a white massage and bodywork with a coconut theme included. I had studied of the "tis tuloso" massage in a previous visit to the Diana Mactan, and took mine I was there, I was pampered every way of the way as therapists pulled me...for I am usually timid without my glasses...from the Sister Pauline, where the cucumber and sesame seeds are to the privacy massage parlors. "You have a difficult time sleep," Nadia exclaimed as we all wrapped out of the elevator, ready for dinner at Abuca and feeling loose-limbed and chill.

* * *

THE NEXT DAY, after a hectic day of shopping, we checked in at the newly renovated Marlboro Bluewater Resort. In new house of the sprawling new "Kinsama Spa." "Kinsama," we are told, "means 'to be reborn' in Japanese and is an acronym" we are all hooked forward to another relaxing massage that evening as we gazed over the sama Spa's menu of services.

Ms. Ria, the spa's manager, and Ms. Carmen Espaldon and an after-dinner chat over wine and Cebu's own Cebu Gov. Vicente Garcia at the Filipino Inn.

It was nearly midnight by the time we arrived at Bluebluge Bluewater, but the staff at Kinsama was waiting for us. Julie and Mandy opted to have their massages in their rooms, but I had chosen to undergo the "pulipo" package, so I was led to the spa's "Ocean Room," decorated by Javanese designer Bonjie Reyes. Aquatic rendition exhibit pieces in a mixed-media setting, giving off an overall impression of openness and calm, soothing murmurs.

The "pulipo" is a head-to-foot massage, after which my body was declared all-over with a mix of VCO and cinnamon, followed by cold mango puree. I was then enclosed in a wrap of banana leaves, and left to "detox" for 30 minutes. I felt like a bibe." I exclaimed.), VCO was poured and allowed to run down my hair.

After being entombed down with a damp banana leaf, I was ordered to soak in a warm bath with herbs, cinnamon and pine petals. I emerged and felt like a baby. I made my way from the Spa to my charming manager, wrapped once in a huge towel and discovered the wrap. I slept instantly, dreaming how for the many surprises and treats Cebu has to offer.

* * *

Comments or public lives@gmail.com

Pampanga politics

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

MAMPANGA IS GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S hometown, the only province in all of Luzon where she actually won in the 2004 presidential election. GMA did not grow up here, nor does she have a good command of the language, but she has always regarded this as her home province. Her father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, a poor, self-made actor, and economic minister is honored figure among Kapampangans.

This is also the home of the President's most distant political protégé, Congressman Mar Jose Miguel "Lito" Lapid and his son, the incumbent Gov. Mark Lapid, and provincial board members Lilia "Bebot" Pineda and her controversial husband Jaime "Diamond" Pineda, popularly regarded "fearless" duo. Mr. Arroyo's eldest son, Mikey, started his political career as vice governor to Lito Lapid. After one term, he was handily as congressman of the second district, and now he is running for governor, with Pineda as running mate. Bong Pineda is known to be his biggest backer.

Until the late 1980s, Pampanga politics was president's the private preserve of the landed and the educated. The highest position accessible to commoners like Lito Lapid and Gloria Macapagal would have been the headship of a small municipality. The dominant political parties of the time—the Liberal Party and the Nacionalista Party—would have snubbed as the political ambitions of these two actors, had they not been propelled by a similar measure of star power.

The emergence of a cash-based economy and the rapid spread of the mass media in the last two waning years permanently altered the terrain of provincial politics. Movie stars would no longer settle for a subordinate role for the sake of political advantage going to those who have achieved such or mass media popularity.

Lito Lapid first seized the political masses by winning over the hearts of movie fans in every province, he became governor, having run a turbulent for himself as a heroic rescuer of stranded victims in the height of the typhoon that devastated the province in 2001, following the May Day rites that threatened the Mayon presidency, Lapid became Mr. Arroyo's mentor on the mediated mass appeal of Joseph "Erap" Estrada. Recognizing his value as a popular symbol, Mr. Arroyo surrounded him into her senatorial slate for the 2001 elections. Today, Lito Lapid, who ran successfully as a senator until 2013, even to be but joined the national race in Makati City in a bid to challenge the popular opposition leader Jun Binay.

Baby Pineda, a former baby-vendor started out as a congressman's wife. Her husband, Diamond, was once mayor of Lubao, Mr. Arroyo's hometown. After serving her final term, she worked post in the provincial board, while her son, Dennis Pineda, started out her as mayor of Lubao. Today, Baby is running for governor, her son Dennis is seeking re-election as Lubao mayor, while Dennis' wife, Lilly Pineda, is running for mayor in the neighboring town of Sasmuan. This unique family has worked to the detriment of thousands of their civil-procedural careers.

Non-transparent, however, appears to be one to political tyrants of the Lapids and the Pinedas has been good for Pampanga. An assertive middle class has grown tired of the marketing those of patronage-dispensing carnival politics that characterized the province in the past. The reign of the Lapids is particularly noted for its lack of any cohesive plan for the province and for its total disregard of the rudiments of good governance. Is it chastity as we have seen in the case of the Pinedas? Or is it the lust and the fabulous conduct the right taste on the millions of tons of gravel and sand taken out of the province every month.

Today, the erratic against the leadership of the Lapids is fed by no less than the Pineda people, which provides enough fuel to pampanguyas to rock if anyone seriously believes that the future of Pampanga could possibly be with Baby and Bong Pineda. This skepticism centers on the public image of the two. "Bong Pineda—the tattoo-covered epitome who has figured in nearly every congressional investigation of illegal gambling in the province for his never been charged, with cases of corruption or as a beneficiary of jueteng and a jueteng financier," one Pampanga resident told me.

Bong Pineda is known to have built and financed countless political careers, but the true that he supposedly takes special pride in was ensuring the victory of his wife, Lilia, in the 2004 congressional race in the 2004 presidential election. A fearless-ing accuse, considered in the enemy territory of Michaelangelo "Louie" Zuzo, nephew of the notorious Comelec official Virgilio Garcillano, shows how this race was orchestrated. I was notified that Pineda's wife, Lilia, who the bets be new districts from municipalities before the May 2004 elections. Document that support this claim, and the witnesses to this forgone were Comelec officials from various regions of the country. Both Mr. Arroyo and Mr. Pineda have denied giving money to anyone, but the persistence of this issue has only enhanced Bong Pineda's reputation as a jueteng baron.

Pampanga politics looked forgotten at the beginning of the year when the fight for the governorship boasted as an exclusive match between the two well-heeled GMA allies—Lapid and Baby Pineda. But the entry of retired Japan-in-the-period of the Catholic priest Fr. Eddie Panlilio has changed the whole picture. The charismatic cleric is running on the assumption that the only solution to the province's problems is to have a good clean reason is, but given the political realities of Pampanga today, perhaps he is right.

* * *

Comments or public lives@gmail.com

Into the dark

"PAN'S LABYRINTH" IS A FAIRY TALE. IT IS CRUEL, intense—and wrenching. There are no dancing tutus or singing candlesticks, and the closest to a fairy godmother is a faun, half-man, half-goat, bitter grey skin scratched with scars, his enormous curving horns emerging out of his head. It is a film whose darkness lingers even after striking tips, and then crackles in with jagged, electrified bolts of color or drama and heart and guts.

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

Writer-director Guillermo del Toro's "Pan's Labyrinth" is not the first movie to bring postwar Spain to the screen. Carlos Saura's "Cria Cuervos" (Raise Ravens) and Victor Erice's "El Espiritu de la Colmena" (The Spirit of the Beehive) are both set in the years following the Spanish Civil War, when the country was torn apart by a bloody conflict between the Republicans and the Nationalists led by Francisco Franco. Both films are seen through the eyes of children, and both are haunted by the ghosts of the past.

"Pan's Labyrinth" is the first to bring the war to the screen, and it is the first to bring the fantastic to the screen. Del Toro's film is set in 1944, when the war is over but the fighting is not. Ofelia (Ivana Baquero) is a young girl who loves fairy tales and books. She is sent to live with her mother, Carmen (Ariadna Gil), who has married an army captain, Ofelia and the pregnant Carmen are taken up to a small hill in the Spanish countryside, where her stepfather will supervise the Republican rebels. Captain Vidal (Sergi Lopez) commands a military outpost. Ofelia, a dark-eyed, bookish girl, is left mostly on her own. She finds a stone labyrinth behind the old mill and, inside, a fairy appears to lead her into the corners of an old, old kingdom to render her new home.

There she meets a faun—who appears to be the horror-movie equivalent of Warner's fairy friends. He greets Ofelia with a bow, and tells her that Princess Moanna, long, long ago, whose father the king had sent guardians all over the world to search, "let to become a princess, even one to her king dom, so prove that she is not merely human, she must perform one more labor more tasks. But for fantasy world is not a place of bright bunnies and magic; the images come out of dark nooks of dreams. There are monsters and they are in an underground pond of mud, sucking the life from a newt's eyes. There is the Pale Man, faceless and eyeless, pulled skin hanging on an elongated body, fingertips of fantastic, where pulling black insects. Some of babies' heads, and whose eyeballs rest in his hands. The Pale Man is the stuff of nightmares, and he is, somewhat incredibly, distracting while running.

The film clubs back and forth from Ofelia's fantasies world to the equally frightening careers of the man. There are men being tortured, rags being empowered, and in one of the more intense scenes, the Captain's soldiers bring a pair of farmers accused of rebellion to the camp. The farmers, a young man and his father, beg for their lives, pleading that they were caught in the wooden's hunt for rabbits. The Captain heeds pages of an old dictator, one of the captors' backpack, and says they are rudimentary formulas. He takes out a bottle of wine. While soldiers watch, he pours the wine on the ground, and then turns into the mouth of the bound son, pounding it in while glass breaks and the man gurgles red wine and blood. As his death, the father shouts, usually follows his knees, all disbelief and shock and accusation. The Captain turns on him and shoots the old man. He picks up the dead man's backpack and pulls out a bottle of wine. He turns to the soldiers, asking the same vows a man who has just discovered an ink stain on his white shirt would use, with his attention to reveal gone for one time. There he settles away to have the rabbit cooked.

Reality is interspersed with Ofelia's amazing fantasy sequences, and the film's success lies in its switching. In the real, hold of his world life are brought together in a terrifying collective moral innocence and the human spirit.

"Pan's Labyrinth" is a commentary on many things: it speaks of innocence, of the corruptions of ideology, of human's and monsters and men, of the nature of fairy tales. But it's a language world reflects the realities she is forced to face, allegations in a form a child understands.

There are those who say the movie is too brutal, too bloody, too much to be plausible. Yet the movie would easily be a commentary on today's reality—there is the hot road bombings in Mindanao, the kidnappings, the blood and murder and those who shoot now and ask questions later. The violence in the day-to-day there is the 9-year old child who is shot in a crossfire, the tortured man who hangs himself by his underwear garter in a prison cell, the rather activist priest, away from free Comelec, the two college girls running for cover in the car old man whose hands are bloodied by his own body.

The Spanish Civil War has long been over, but Ofelia's world—and in anybody's today anyone's in a country shipped again and again with carnage—they carnage that there seems to be no other reason but disease.

* * *

"Pan's Labyrinth," is self-absorbing, has won numerous awards and nominations from all over the world. It won Best Cinematography, Best Art Direction and Best Makeup in the 2006 Oscars, and was nominated for Best Original Screenplay. Ben Pastrige Ellen and Best Musical Score. It won Best Foreign Language Film in the 64th academy awards and was crowned as a 21 summer standing winners at the Cannes. It is, in this writer's opinion, one of the best films ever made.

* * *

For comments, last year, MS JAMES wants, my favorite, message him email to JAMES for Globe free and SMS for Smart. E-mail at letter.legal@gmail.com

"Bristol parties may win and lose elections but there is one party that I mean to win during every election: that party is the Filipino people."
—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at a press conference in Davao City, Nov. 3, 1999

"Tax breaks raise the capital building bar...one manifest political campaigner."
—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo talking about having a super-rich political running Mindanao Island, Sept. 13, 1999

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to jaetorres@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Juan V. Serrano Jr.

Dynasty and drugs

Senatorial candidates	Antidynasty law	Importation of low-priced medicine
Edgardo Angara (Team Unity)	Political dynasties top both panel and bad niche. One advantage is constitutionally will be assessed to participate in progress and politics. The downside, of course, comes when people start abusing their powers. I believe that it is only on those if there are not particularly rich and are doing a disservice to their constituents. The question is not "who can do either?" but "are they able to deliver?"	Getting the cost of health is a personal responsibility for most people for the rich, too, my public duty. I have argued many times, in a variety of forums with successive Secretaries of Health, against the creation of the National Committee on Health to promote health for all, and called without the creation now. It's not in the economy in the elderly's decision-making. So, the time is at present by comparing, reimbursement or the lower Chinese list. Of course, I welcome that will make available health support to as many huge a with council's money importing quality low-priced medicines.
Sonejuro Emmon "Noynoy" Aquino III (Liberal Opposition)	Will support efforts to enforce the constitutional prohibition on political dynasty.	You're know of legislative endorsement making to amend the Intellectual Property Code to allow parallel importation of medicines, as the latter step is essential to broader economic growth, health, etc.
Jinkee Arroyo (Team Unity)	I don't particularly endorse political dynasty because that's associated all over the world. Somewhere Gwendoy (my formerly, while he was in office, the former Makati was also another brother Antonio), one and all the remember me. Since I'm not a political dynasty—the only she has, the time has been passed because I don't think any interpretation of my election would support that. So it is practiced all over the world and people want that for the good hand. Every parliamentary area the former Cory, during the economy was also bad and cannot. That was one of a different one and we continued for many.	No answer.
Mirriam Madriñan (Kapatiran)	Papers still continue to support continuous assessment of history in order to continue a business arrangement that growth and the economic political dynasties.	Importation of medicine solely profit tend to producing our own appropriate conditions because there is more competitive otherwise we import goods.
Allan Peter "Compañero" Cayetano (Senatus Opposition)	Family members in politics, as in, does not equate to dynasty it is using them you equal access to seeking to government because the leaders can publish transparent and so have to many offices, and some for instance, are public servants. What is important in that people have the freedom to choose. There are many examples around the world of family members and big supporters in governmental and doing much good.	The former administration has neglected the health needs of the people. The cost of medicine is now beyond the reach of most Filipinos. I support the effort to import these critical medicines at cheap drug costs for the benefit of the people. I will also consult on certain things. Government regulation of drugs are an essential of convenience. But this has to address if it is allowing profit over to purchase medicines directly from profiteers disguised as by stealing medicines instead of the most beneficial here in government system.
Anna Dominique "Nikki" Coseteng (Senatus Opposition)	Our Constitution has a provision against political dynasties but it has never been implemented. Most of our elected officials are related to each other in one way or another. Political dynasties are not bad per se. But when they abuse their power and use it for their own benefit and not for the benefit of the people, then they become a problem. I am not against political dynasties as long as they are qualified and competent.	While I am not against the importation of low-priced medicines, we must ensure that these are of the same quality as those produced by the local pharmaceutical companies. We must not allow the importation of substandard drugs. We must also ensure that the importation of these drugs will not affect negatively the local pharmaceutical companies. I suggest we take advantage of the patronage so that consumers will know how much a drug sells in Canada, say, the manufacturer can't sell it for double.
Mike "Sol" Defensor (Team Unity)	I believe in giving the people the ultimate will to choose their leaders. In selecting their leaders, the basic should always be competence and the track records that can be referred to the public. The will of the electorate must be respected. Only a few of the basic tenets of a democratic society.	One of the priority programs of the government is to bring quality but affordable medicines to the public. Notwithstanding, the implementation of this concerns me, as there are laws succeeded in reducing the price of medicines. We are importing medicines from India, Nigeria and the Middle East. Importation of medicines with the Department of Health and the FDA. Support for the importation of medicines. Price will benefit the public.
Francis "Chiz" Escudero (Nacionalista Opposition)	Dynasty potential conflict of interest since I am in the district that used to be held by my father until 1998. I still believe myself from the same district and the same voters that members of the house. For me, there will be instances that my say in the matter of law or else will still run for a candidate to run for or else have relatives to provide voters to still no longer visit the death a candidate because of my relationship.	I say to focus on such a source if federal IT will indicated to the benefit of my people. Safety is to assist them to the provided, however, in connection with quality control and conflict and provide rights.
Richard "Dong" Gomez (Independent)	The problem is, the multimedia operation in the Constitution is not yet defined by law. It's really a question of who owns which or has yet, some politicians are violating elections, and based on my own studies with. There is no solution I.	All Filipinos should be given access to cheap medicines. Poverty is a major problem in our country. That's why my priority is to make the citizens of Philippines.
Dragnito Roxanas (Independent)	Curbing political dynasties was incorporated in bills (including those I filed) and certified as urgent during the Ramos administration but was never seriously given consideration or support.	Access laws and policies that are to be implemented by government, can be to duplicitously should be made. We need to strike a balance between the quality and affordability of the medicines we provide our people.
Jamalul "Kiram" Kiram III (Team Unity)	Not as standing yet to operationalize the antidynasty provision of the 1987 Constitution.	Expand the program and increase the budget allocation assistance with DOH treatments and health services budget.
Panfilo "Ping" Lacson (Senatus Opposition)	I support the clause for the establishment, finally, of the set of implementing guidelines for the antidynasty law. Political groups and families will continue to pay lip service to the advocacy for as long as they are dumb enough and ordained, while the realistic prospects are organized to rule. But its enforcement should not be entirely nullify for the perpetuation of political power. The political family overlapping relationship today has shown from one family easily capture the republican under the pretext of law.	Health is a priority in my advocacy so I have participated in my WHO legislative agenda 1, therefore, squarely support the policy allowing importation of low-priced medicines to enable Filipinos to have easier and fuller access to more medicines. Governments, however, must ensure that consumption comes first despite low-priced medicines and that they are safe for consumption.
Lorna Legarda (Senatus Opposition)	Most times have accused, but unfortunately, unacceptable attempts, to come out with a law outlawing and prohibiting dynasties in public office as mandated by the Constitution. Armed intrusion groups always appear one way or another. Nevertheless, our measures are meant to comply with the constitutional mandate.	The importation of pharmaceutical products to the Philippines is a mixed bag basically. The market dynamics of medicines really do not operate, even if manufacturers actually make a concerted effort to introduce comparable to those manufactured here. If importing medicines will bring down the cost of health care to the Philippines, then we should support the proposal by policymakers. Nevertheless, however, there are several grounds. Such medicines should not penalize our skilled labor nor set up close beyond their means for the drugs to be imported.
Ricardo "Ric" Magsaysay (Team Unity)	There seems to be confusion of the word "dynasty." The usage to be from the historical context in which it originates that Philippine and elsewhere are built in the Roman. The people from my right to choose their leaders. If the problem, debated many times before, and no decision was held. One is dynasty, but the Philippines, local officials are elected by the people.	I am for importation of low-cost medicines.
Oscar "Bobby" Medrano (Team Unity)	I am in favor of keeping dynasties under our political system. But we should also put limit when we speak by dynasty. We should study that very carefully.	That's a good idea. But another option is to support locally made drugs—the herbal medicines. In doing so, we are also providing jobs to our countrymen.
Serena "Jessie" Oreta (Team Unity)	There are families that have left good legacies of public service, which are being continued to this day. Political dynasties are part of our political culture. Our people have the right to choose their leaders. We have to strike a balance between the quality and affordability of the medicines we provide our people.	The cost of medicine in the country is one of the highest in Asia. The high cost becomes a major stumbling block to improving the well-being of Filipinos, especially low-cost medicines can only address a part of the problem. However, we must ensure that standards of quality are met. In addition, we need to strengthen the capacities of the Bureau of Food and Drugs in order to provide the necessary technical assistance.
John Henry "Sonny" Osmeña (Senatus Opposition)	Basically, it should not infringe on individual rights. It should not close access to the children of those who hold office.	I cannot favor of low-priced drugs.
Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan (Liberal Party)	We believe that there is a need to enact an Anti-Dynasty Law that will regulate rather than prohibit membership of the same family from seeking elective posts. We do not question the capabilities of members of the same family from participating in public office, but we cannot have policies that can ensure broader representation of constituents.	Because it is economically beneficial for the country and people, importing low-priced medicines is a boon. It's good to challenge on the local pharmaceutical companies if necessary it should be taken as a challenge for the industry to be competitive. My friends at Sunday Mass say quality medicines for our people should prevail. There are the medicines that are produced by the Philippine Pharmaceutical Industry (PPI) that are value-oriented in Efficacy. The Bureau of Pharmaceuticals should guarantee quality so that if children or women want to take it.
Joseph "Jeci" Paredes (Nacionalista)	Sure, but [with] the long-delayed and delayed law which, but all dynastic considerations have shortened.	Yes, but necessary measures must be put in place to ensure safety and efficacy for the protection of the public. They should be reserved to only for the short term. For the long term, the government must encourage and develop homegrown or domestically manufactured substitutes which could prove to be cheaper, safer, more efficient, and more readily available.
Apolinar "Nene" Pimentel Jr. (Senatus Opposition)	I have an open mind on antidynasty proposals as I imagine, like in the realistic sense in I will go with the point that at the office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines, which is the most powerful position of our presidential form of government.	Low-priced medicines should be allowed only in our country but subject to strict quality checks.
Ralph "Kareto" Recto (Team Unity)	I subscribe no problem at voting for a bill is good one in principle. Political families are not a unique Philippine phenomenon. America has its own family political dynasties, such as the Kennedys in the Philippines, there's supposedly political dynasties, such as the Aquinos and Cojuangcos. The only difference is that in the Philippines, there's supposedly political dynasties, such as the Aquinos and Cojuangcos. The only difference is that in the Philippines, there's supposedly political dynasties, such as the Aquinos and Cojuangcos.	After the conditions are right, importation should be of the right strategy and kind. The challenge is not to import brand-name drugs, which are beyond the reach of most Filipinos, especially those in the countryside, but to import generic drugs, or the cheaper, of ensuring patient compliance.
Prospero "Nani" Pichay Jr. (Team Unity)	This is to an antidynasty provision in the Constitution and I think we have to respect the enabling law.	There should be a balance between the importation of low-priced medicines and the need to let the local drug industry continue to be viable. We need to import low-priced medicines to help our countrymen cope with the high drug prices but we don't also want to kill the local drug industry by their abundance of cheaper.
Dante "Tonyboy Cojuangco" Reyes (Senatus Opposition)	Implicitly written in our 20-year old Constitution is an antidynasty provision, which through all these years has not been defined. It is about time that the incoming Congress take the bull by the horns and write the law once and for all. Otherwise, the provision will remain a dead letter. In writing the law, 20 Senate, or members has membership for the former, thus providing a distinction on the certain Congressional districts.	Are we recommend the providing reasonable price control mechanism to the distribution of important medicines. Recommended to the use of wholesale combined medicines are marketable authorized by government and regulated by the government?
Luis "Chiefy" Singson (Team Unity)	The framers of our national law would establish for election or a public office does not actually restrict. The law can rise to the capability of the elected officials to promote or maintain effectively. However, we must recognize that some family political machinery can lead to "dynasties" or "political clans" that have established themselves for decades. Nevertheless, we must strengthen our mechanisms to make the people and their opportunities to remove ineffective and corrupt officials, who when elected from office by virtue of their political ties or affinity.	The importation of low-priced medicines is a priority.
Adrian Sison (Kapatiran)	Has the antidynasty law	Importation of low-priced medicines is a priority.
Vicente "Tito" Sotto III (Team Unity)	I'm in favor of an antidynasty law although, I would, we have a political family. The framers made a law having been passed is too difficult of running up with a clear and reasonable definition of the term "political dynasty." In other degrees of consanguinity or affinity should the prohibition apply? At what jurisdictional coordination of positions should it apply? It would be unfair to have a broad prohibition preventing qualified candidates from running for public office just because some members of their families are elected to public service.	Regarding low-priced medicines is a major issue in addressing the problem of access to affordable and quality medicines. Since for we must ensure that standards of quality are always met and we constantly kept updated to the task at hand and that we are not just importing drugs that are of low quality. We also need to update and develop more affordable and traditional medicines, which may be more affordable to the majority of our people. In addition, we need to strengthen the capabilities of regulatory bodies such as the Bureau of Food and Drugs in order to prevent the entry of fake and inferior medicines.
Antonio "Magkasi" Trillanes IV (Senatus Opposition)	It's for the people to decide. It's unfair to have a particular young family that became for in the race of to exclude from office.	I support the importation of low-priced medicines.
Manuel "Manny" Villar Jr. (Senatus Opposition)	It is with the premise still with the people as we also have no more than really matters as the choice is our leaders solely rests in the hands of the electorate.	Only we must set forum President, the People supported the All Governments the power of medicines to control the of Medicines Law to allow the importation and used in development of potential medicines to provide affordable the benefit our people as people.
Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri (Team Unity)	I believe that every person has the right to run for public office. I see historical people from creating for public office then they will not be in favor of the antidynasty provision. I believe that we can create a law that will not violate the constitutional provision and qualified to opt for the people elected in the people from running for public office if they are competent and qualified to do so. We should always review the people decide who have come to represent them. For the right running I also should be made clear to prevent the rule of just who is qualified in many areas of their country.	The high cost of medicine affects my poor most people the rich. That is why right and all in the interest of the Filipino for the government to find ways to lower medicine prices. This could be done by buying low-priced medicines already marketing the so-called generic medicine, by encouraging the manufacturing of drug medicines in the country, and placing prices of medicines at the maximum medicine prices determined by the government. Only after these measures can be exhausted, I believe that the importation of medicines will require genuine cost-effective studies by the country's drug companies, so as not to make drugs more expensive.

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Bishop slams 'sham' peace covenants

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya —Bishop Ramon Villena of the Catholic diocese here assailed the pretense being shown by some candidates who sign peace covenants but continue to sow terror in the campaign leading to the May 14 elections.

Villena said it was "unfortunate" that a grenade attack or the burning of Action Man or Bahay Saya on Friday marked the first incident of election-related violence in the province, less than five days after the signing of a peace covenant by politicians here on Sunday.

"This (incident) goes to show that some of these candidates signed the covenant only for show, that their pledge was too easily sincere," he said.

On Friday, unidentified suspects lobbed a grenade inside the compound of Saya in Aritao. The blast damaged his vehicle but the mayor and his family members were unhurt.

On Sunday, local candidates signed and swore to a peace covenant at the Saint Dominic cathedral here to ensure a peaceful, orderly and honest conduct of the elections.

Villena described the grenade attack as "atrocious," which, he said, was the handiwork of politicians who are "so ambitious and greedy for power."

"I strongly condemn the said heinous, cowardly act by people in power. As a man of God, I appeal to the conscience of the perpetrators to stop their evil deeds. Let us not allow some people to destroy the peace that we have in the province," Villena said in the homily.

ELECTIONS claimed its first casualty in Aliaga, retired Chief Insp. Enrique Bacani, an independent candidate running for councilor in Barangay Inner, who was shot dead Thursday. TERESA B. CERVANTES/INQUIRER

He also said the Church also participates in organizing activities and election forums where local candidates commit to a peace covenant.

Comelec said the Church would no longer send short messages to the election forums to candidates, such as graft and corruption, should be addressed.

"When we speak about the (inadequacies) in the election, we always expect improvement. We fear for our lives, too, because after all, we are also human beings. But we have faith that the Lord is with us ... We do not run away from (our responsibility)," Comelec said.

In Nueva Ecija, the ex-policeman assigned to Mayor Edgar Vega, Rodolfo Antonino, who were accused of being the first shots in last week's clash in Jaen town, were explained on Tuesday.

Chief Supt. Ismael Rubarya, Comelec-Laoag police director, said the policemen, all members of the regional mobile group (RMG), were replaced by eight members of the police's Special Action Forces (SAF). Melvin Gascon and Bernie Cohen, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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ROUNDUP

Holiday in San Pablo City

SAN PABLO CITY — President Macapagal-Arroyo has declared Monday, May 7, a special nonworking holiday in this city as it celebrates the 87th founding anniversary. Ms. Arroyo issued Proclamation No. 1286 on May 2, through Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, declaring Monday, May 7, 2007, a special nonworking holiday in San Pablo City to give its people the opportunity to celebrate their 87th Foundation day. The mayor's office said this year's celebration will be more subdued compared with previous commemorative programs because the incumbent chief executive, Mayor Vicente B. Amante, is running for reelection, and he does not want the celebration to be used for campaigning. The program will be under the chairmanship of City Administrator Lucky S. Amante, who also chaired the 17th Diamond Festival and Miss Golden Country last January.

Romeo F. Perez, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Two inmates bolt Siaton jail

SIAYAGUTY CITY — Two inmates locked in the district jail of Siaton, 50 km south of here, on Sunday gave the slip and escaping their jail guard. Brother Mariano Hamada, the provincial police director, identified the escapees as Pino Wyng, 37, and Lucio Guazon, 34, both from Siaton town. They brought with them an M-16 rifle and a .45-cal. pistol belonging to the Siaton District Jail. Wyng and Guazon were powerful drug lords of Barangay Cadanglasan and after being the Cadanglas was rushed to a hospital and is now out of danger.

Alex Paz, Inquirer Visayas

Napocor interconnects with Panay

ILOILO City — The National Power Corp. (Napocor) has interconnected with this city's sole power distributor Iloilo I Power Distribution Company (Ipeco), to augment the city's power requirements. Napocor will supply Ipeco a steady 26-megawatt power "at anytime" in an "agreement in principle" reached by both companies, said Napocor president Cyril del Callar, who was here during the agreement ceremony Thursday. Officials from Napocor and Ipeco were to sign the contract to effect the agreement on Thursday but it did not push through because of a death in the Castro family, the majority owner of Ipeco.

Avelar Burgos, Inquirer Visayas

Cory brother running for gov

IFALUK, the sports personalities seeking positions in the coming elections in just over a week, Jose "Peping" Cojuangco has the biggest task at hand and the biggest responsibility. The current Philippine Olympic Committee president will be running for the governor's post in his native Tarlac, joining the political arena yet again. "It's a calling I have to answer," said Cojuangco, who boasted reporters at the Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac recently. "Serving the people of my province has been my job since way back. I don't see any reason why I should have to turn my back on them." The 73-year-old has encountered many problems in Tarlac before and will be vying for the governorship post for the first time. He started as a councilor in 1967, became vice mayor and then mayor of Paniqui town. He became three terms as congressman in 2000.

Manang Castillo

Police seize guns in dawn raid

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Elements of the Regional Special Operations Group (RSOG) of the Calabarzon police raided the homes of three suspected drug pushers in Biñan, Laguna, and arrested two and seized firearms on Saturday dawn.

Arrested were Ramon Cuesta, 53, of Barangay San Vicente, Biñan, and Serafin Cuesta, 37, of Barangay San Dominga, Biñan.

Chief Supt. Leocadio Santiago, RSOG chief, said the simultaneous raids on the houses of the suspects were covered by search warrants issued by Judge Cesar Mangalindan of the Santa Cruz Regional Trial Court.

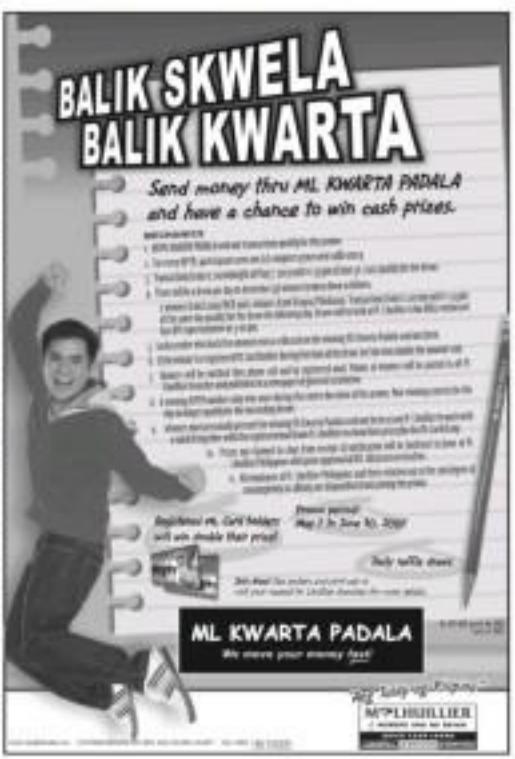
Raiders said the men ensnared down on the houses of the suspects at around 5:30 a.m.

He said an unlicensed M16 assault rifle and a magazine loaded with bullets were seized from the rifle while a .45-cal. pistol was confiscated from Cuesta.

He said due aside from the residences of the two, the police raided the house of a certain Alfred Arroyo but it yielded negative results.

Raiders said the three were among those in the watchlist of persons involved in the illegal drug trade in the area.

He said police will file charges of illegal possession of firearms against the suspects. Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon



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Aetas unpaid for land taken by BCDA for flagship project

PORAC, PAMPANGA—THE GOVERNMENT'S flagship project Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway has swiped 50 hectares of land within what Aetas proclaim to be part of their ancestral domain.

The government, they said, has not also paid them for the land.

Sota elders Jungle Dumagat and Ramon Cosme, as well as many Capoyo of the Kapunungan Ita, the organization of Aeta in Porac and Floridablanca, revealed this at the celebration of the tribe's observance of the International Earth Day here on Saturday.

Serrano, 66, said the road construction cut their land near Hacienda Ramona.

"Napakalupet de ng lupa na inagaw nun ngani ala pang bayad. Makakatayo pa ng database ni (They even asked us to present documents. Up to now they have not paid us. For rights to our land are evidence)," Serrano said.

Roberto Gervasio, SCTEX manager for operations support, disputed the claims of the Aeta elders.

"That's impossible since all lot owners have been identified," Gervasio said. "No Aeta land was occupied by the project."

The SCTEX is a 94-km, four-lane toll road being built by the government's Bases Conversion Development Authority.

As counterpart in the 931-billion Japanese loan used to build the road, the BCDA claimed it bought more than 1,300 lots for the road's right-of-way.

Capoyo said the Aeta have no titles to show ownership of their ancestral domain.

"For the memories of our elders, the whole mountains, including Mt. Pinatubo to the hills below them, belong to us Aeta in Bamporgo, Tarlac and Zambales," Capoyo said.

Serrano said he brought their problem with the SCTEX to the attention of Gov. Jumbby Madrigal in October last year.

"I hope [Madrigal] follows up on it," he said.

Saturday's Earth Day event for the Aeta turned out to be full of interest.

They signed a petition paper asking the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples to cancel consummation of agreement their village officials signed with the Pineapple Copper Miner Inc. in October last year as precondition for exploration on Mt. Negro in Barangay Santos.

Cosme said the MOA was signed without the consent of elders and other residents.

PCMI has yet to start studies or operations.

Serrano said he feared that their resistance to the mining project might bring more soldiers to the village, like 15 years ago when another mining company operated in the Zambales boundary.

"The land is like life and a mother to us," Capoyo said.

Cosme said non-tourism projects have also become more of a disadvantage to them as foreign and local companies deal only with local officials, leaving them out in the consultation process.

"They take away even the water that flows in our watersheds to sell as mineral water for soldiers," he said. Sancho Ovejita, Inquirer Central Luzon

Soldiers, DENR men seize logs from Sierra Madre

LAGUNA CITY—SOLDIERS AND AGENTS OF the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Regional Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force (Regional) dealt another blow against illegal loggers in Quezon province when they seized at least 2,506 board feet of narra lumber believed illegally cut in the Sierra Madre, according to a report from environment officials.

Gloria Forbes, Tanggol Kalikasan program officer, said a team from the Special and the Army's 2nd Special Forces Company, headed by 1Lt. Benedict Harvey Dimalo, confiscated the narra lumber on April 30.

"Acting on an intelligence report that the coastal village of San Juan in Mauban, Quezon, is being used as transshipment site of illegal logs coming from Infanta, Jomalig, government forces immediately conducted operation in the area," Forbes said.

The team discovered 63 pieces of abandoned narra lumber measuring as over 1906,000 board feet in various hidden places in the village.

According to the military, the hot logs were often transported by sea to the coastal village of Caridad in Infanta and Pandili and Gumacatowns.

Sources from the military also suspected that unscrupulous DENR personnel in Quezon were working in collusion with Mauban-based illegal log traders by providing security and safe transport of illegal logs to their destinations.

Two vehicles loaded with undocumented first-class timber, worth close to P80,000, were also seized by the military in two incidents in fiscal operation.

In a report, Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes, who also heads the Planwid, said the apprehensions took place in Antipolo and Infanta, Rizal.

In August, around 1,500 board feet of lauan timber were seized last April 1976 on forty containers under Capt. Emilio Facundo while being transported to Batangas but Jun shoot-i-ang.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

DIFFERENT CAMPAIGN
Amid the frenzy of the election campaign spreads a different, poster, not of a candidate for an elective government position, but a candidate just the same. The poster promotes the campaign of a contestant in the popular Pinoy Big Brother program.

Right-hand drive vehicles seized in Cebu

By Jolene R. Rubanico
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS intercepted on Friday two illegal shipments of right-hand drive vehicles that were smuggled in the port of Cebu, Sun. Ingram, District Collector Ricardo Belmonte yesterday said.

The shipments were grounded after they arrived in Cebu port on April 16 on board MV Eagle Excellence after Commissioner Napoleon Morales, head of Task Force Against Smuggling (TFAS), issued an alert memo, Belmonte said.

Six right-hand drive motor vehicles were discovered inside two container vans consigned to Mayani Motors Corp., based in Mandaue City and Gerrum Motors Trading in Talisay City.

Belmonte said the shipments were wrongly declared as used replacement parts for trucks but they contained right-hand drive vehicles instead.

A Toyota Prado Cargo, Hyundai Galloper and Toyota Camry consigned to Gerrum Trading and a Mitsubishi Dingo, a Toyota TRG and Mitsubishi Lancer consigned to Mayani Motors, were found in the container vans held at Cebu International Port (CIP).

These vehicles were being shipped to Japan at first and shipped to the Philippines.

Belmonte said the estimated value of the shipments was P3 million.

A warrant for seizure and detention (WSD) would be issued on Monday as the investigation is being conducted against the consignees, Belmonte said.

No representatives from the consignees were present during last Friday's inspection and opening of the vans despite notices issued to them, he added.

The evidence said they were checking the legitimacy and records of the consignees. Both were found to be not registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

A press statement from the Bureau of Customs said that TFAS received information that smuggling syndicates have shifted operations from Manila to other ports.

Morales, in a separate interview, said smuggling activities in Metro Manila (Metro) prompting smugglers to transfer operations to other ports.

TACLOBAN SORTIE
Leading opposition senatorial candidate Loren Legarda raises to the stage with Alfred Romualdez, candidate for mayor of Tacloban City, and his wife Cristina. Legarda leads recent surveys for senatorial candidates but said she was not letting her guard down.

INQUIRER Mindanao

Mindanao issues take poll backseat

By Gerardine Lazaro
Davao City

IS MINDANAO TAKING the backseat in this election?

"Whether you like it or not, the elections in May is a personality contest among candidates," cried Bro. Eliseo Mercado, chairman of the Iglesia Ni Cristo in the last rallies of the election campaign period held in Davao City.

Real issues—including Mindanao's problems and needs—will solve after the elections."

Years, who used to lobby for an increased share of Mindanao in the country's national budget, said candidates were hardly to blame for the absence of a clear orientation of issues on the island. There is simply no concerted pressure for them to do so, he said.

"In Mindanao vote is so fragmented," said Years, who once helped convince the Ilonggo bloc-dominated constabulary brass in 1968 to refrain from presidential candidates their stand on issues affecting Mindanao.

Even those candidates who claim to have roots in Mindanao, perhaps can be expected much, he said. "If they cannot articulate a clear understanding on Mindanao issues, what can you expect from them?"

Missing dynamic

Years said a Mindanao agenda for elections could not come from an individual alone but from the dynamics of "different institutions, individuals, public and private agencies, school interest for being a true multisector programs designed to address the Mindanao situation."

At present, the dynamic is still painfully missing, he said. The absence of a strong pressure on candidates to focus on issues has confused the election fight to a battle of personalities.

Everything, he said, had to wait until after election time. "It's the reality in Philippine elections," he said. "The election campaign is a personal and everything else becomes secondary."

But even so people are left with very limited choices, Years said, the sprouting of party-list groups with strong Mindanao perspectives seem to raise ideal, doing what the traditional politicians failed to do: bring Mindanao to the election discussion.

Where he thinks the Mindanao issues declared an all-out war in Mindanao in 2000, Moro people were dismayed that we saw among high Moro officials in Congress and the Cabinet down-right against it. The war which was repeated during the recent administration, had displaced thousands of people in Moro communities from their homes.

Voice of the Moro

Zainab Ampatuan, chair of the Bangsamoro nation's first group based (Moro), said this lead inspired more of the Bangsamoro people to set up a group that would satisfy the Moro voice and concerns in Congress.

"We wanted a group that can carry the voice of the Bangsamoro in Mindanao, without alienating the indigenous peoples and the Christians," she said.

"Sorry" seems weak, shared among the ethno-linguistic tribes of Maranao, Tausug, Iranun and Maguindanao, and the Bukidnon-speaking Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia. The group hopes to bring Moro people's quest for self-determination and other issues affecting Moros, Christians and indigenous peoples in Mindanao.

Other party-list groups include the Anak Mindanao (Amin) and Bro. Mosiato of Indigenous Peoples (AIM), which introduces some issues affecting the Moros.

For Ampatuan's delegation, the most groups there are to honest Mindanao issues, for better. Election issues or not, there has been known to speak against human rights violations, torture and disappearances of Moro leaders, she said.

Even with the fragile peace and disorder-ridden Moro delegation, the group seeks to bring to the legislature the issues that had caused the conflict, in the first place, she said.

Party-list groups

Under Republic Act No. 7941, or the Party-list System Act of 1995, party-list groups are allowed a seat in Congress if they win at least two percent of all votes cast. Each group is allowed at most three seats, or six percent of the votes cast for party-list during the elections.

"We have to do away with Moro representatives who don't speak the interest of the people," said Ampatuan. "Our people long to have a voice in the halls of Congress," she said.

This distance of voice coming from the Moro people has made the Moro's picked enough support in the 2001 elections.

Ampatuan claimed that had it not been for the "displacement" (vote padding and cheating) alleged to happening in Moro communities with strong military presence and the black propaganda against her group, Amin would have been sent in Congress in the last elections.

She said the group would continue its vigilant policies and laws that are against the Moro people. It also wants to unite the 11 different Moro tribes with indigenous peoples and the Christians.

Ampatuan said most of the women and youth leaders of Moro minorities, which traditionally relied on male leadership and the feudal rule of their datus, it must be because the datu has the traditional rulers "abused the rights of the people" when it is under attack, and like in the same right the group is trying to defend and protect Congress, she said.

This is just the beginning, however, Ampatuan said.

A COMELEC employee inspects the 710 vote-ballot boxes for the election in polling precincts.

Martial arts expert weans youth away from drug influence

By Noel D. Maulanz
Inquirer Mindanao

JOLO, SULU—AS GOVERNMENT forces pursue kidnap elements in a seemingly endless cycle of violence, another battle is being waged to keep the island province safe and drug-free: Brazilian martial arts.

Sports development has taken center stage as an effort to draw vulnerable young Muslim youth and help wean them away from drug addiction.

One of those at the forefront of the physical fitness campaign is Master Shoaff Jun Ken Montes, the province's youth counselor of the Muslim Home of Opportunity.

"Sports activities get our youth into the ways and path of better nothing to become citizens of the land and we've got them many times over," he said in a Filipino-Tagalog.

Montes is a martial arts expert and teaches at the Tae Jang martial arts club on Mount Asturias in Barangay Bud. The club is where the Sulu Sheridan Karate Club, a member of the Philippine Karate-to Federation (PKF), holds sessions.

In June 200 members have registered since the club was founded almost 10 years ago.

Montes said he was already that some of the alumni had become outstanding contributors of society in our group, including the who became

> "Martial arts and kikam are a good blend of eastern disciplines ..."

The youth attributed to the drug to what he described as the "blend" in the spiritual and social challenge of Islam, and physically of martial arts.

"Martial arts and kikam are a good blend of eastern disciplines, physically and spiritually," he said.

Montes, who is also a councilor of this town, admitted that efforts to draw the youth into physical fitness activities were hampered by the military's stationary operations. Sports enthusiasts hope to entice their attention on all of the illicit

The government has remained its campaign over the weekend with offensives launched by the group of Rahim Muhammad Ibrahim Front (MILF) and a band of brigands. Manual for the beheading of seven construction workers last month.

Sulu has 10 municipalities, including this capital town of eight barangays, which take active part in basketball leagues, according to local sports officials.

Montes, 46, a married man father, left twenty years, makes his in Parang, both in a religious fraternity and municipal council member, in the province-wide sports campaign is not problem.

Of municipals locally, Montes is probably the only elected leader who goes around without a security or armed bodyguards.

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Nuns' nursing school cares

From page A1

they opened a nursing program that weathers students splendidly along with the winds of the storm.

"Instead of complaining about nurses going abroad, we could become [want to] earn more money, we will help. I proclaim it names 'who' stays," says Sr. Josefin Rivera, SSpS, president of the CHI College of Nursing.

Rivera, herself a nurse, enters it another observation: When Filipino nurses began "selling the homeland" overseas in the mid-1990s, nursing schools sprung up in practically every corner of the country and fresh graduates flew out shortly after being granted passport status.

Commercialization

"Whether they leave it in three months or not, I mean, I take up nursing because it's the easiest way to get to the United States, Canada, or elsewhere. That's the sad thing with the commercialization of the profession," Rivera laments.

She points out that some patients today are naming into plum "bedridden department" and are less generous with their tips compared to others before the nursing boom, who did not count the minutes in their current needs or dug off and went to both and about their monthly pay as the quality of their services.

The nursing dean, Sr. Rivera observes, SOI, has one true that seems to set her school apart from the rest.

In 2006—that such dollars as the drooling cost, more new graduates may take a chemical to also choosing their vote by the good Hereafter.

"What else could be the reason for the massive shortage [of nurses]? In the 1960s, students took up nursing because they wanted to 'serve humanity.' But now it's because they want to earn dollars," he says.

Seeing God in others

The nursing school has taken up the challenge. To ease many from the grave [unintelligible] that now plagues the profession, it has introduced "added dimensions" in its curricula program aimed at producing nurses imbued with the "Dominican Mission Spirituality."

In layman's terms, it means "seeing God in others."

For one semester in all levels, students attend a subject, Supervised Clinical Pastoral Education (SCPE), where they learn to serve patients beyond their [other] physical needs.

Rivera explains: Of 99 percent of pathological ailments are rooted in troubled souls, care is important to attend to a patient's spiritual side to no peculiar healing.

SCPE thus puts emphasis on spiritual care, and students are trained to become a comforting presence through simple touches—holding the patients' hands or arm, or even just holding them.

Students are also taught such things as assessing patients who have inattention, offering them water, and bringing them out up in bed in the process.

It's going to be extra tally in every patient's hospital chart, Rivera says.

Testing the spirit

But if CHI nursing students are to become attuned to their patients' spiritual needs, their own spirit will have to be tested.

During the summer, before entering their senior years, students are sent to stay in a far-flung community where [unintelligible] to live their lives in [unintelligible].

The school's first graduating batch, consisting of 35 young women, are completing their month-long "community immersion experience" in the homelands of Jaro Jose. Today, when they are bid-ping neglected residents organize a [unintelligible]. They are expected to commence [unintelligible].

According to them, the students are staying in a small two-story house made of bamboo, with the sky mostly serving as their roof.

Water is drawn from a pump, the source of light on the unmodified is not [unintelligible].

The first few days of the immersion apparently came as a shock to some students, especially those from wealthy families.

Worried parents even attempted to rent a house nearby so they could check on their children.

But this is against the program's policies, Rivera points out, adding that he had to reprimand a student who smirked her pet dog into the house because she could not sleep well without it.

Empathy

"This is part of their formation and training so that in the future they will know how to understand and empathize with their patients," Rivera says.

She hopes that the students' experiences in their fellow Filipinos' impoverished conditions will soften the worldly appeal of the coming profession and inspire them to stay in their motherland to serve.

But she concedes that the school cannot totally prevent its graduates from traveling to distant shores.

"Proactively, we tenth them to ask [themselves], about their vocation and God's calling ... with the hope that if they can commit to these questions, they can make better decisions," she says.

The spiritual education extends to the school's base hospital, the Dr. Leo [unintelligible] Hospital (OLLH) in Binalbagan City, where students put theory into practice three weeks.

Rivera has worked in the CHI-owned and -managed hospital for 20 years as various intern-to-dean 1981, at one point serving as nurse supervisor.

Gilda Reyes, assistant director of the OLLH nursing service, assured them in a move in 1993.

Missionaries anywhere

But, again, like the school, the 60-year-old hospital dedicated to, among others, "serve every patient with the Christian compassion of which the Gospel speaks," echoed yet (in the era of ID) and to who do not of present patients also do).

"It will be very difficult for us to stop them from doing that. What we can do is train them to be good nurses so that even if they leave us after two years, at least we know that they will become missionaries wherever they are," says Sr. Marie Bernard Reyes, SSpS, director of the nursing service.

According to the school's statistics, the OLLH boasts on spiritual care throughout employee service ... are Tara [unintelligible]," says Sr. Asuncion Lemos, SSpS, human resource and development officers.

With this, the spiritual care of the CHI nursing program has somehow expanded to the hospital staff members who come from varying orientations.

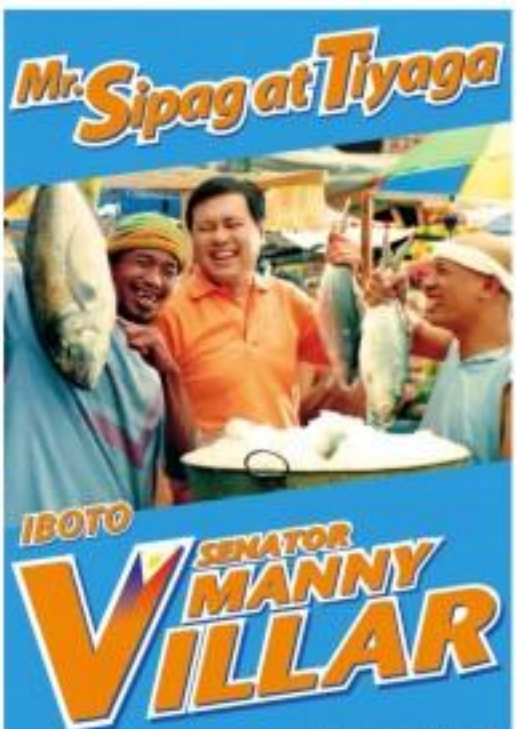
Daily communion

Communion is administered to patients daily at 6 a.m., and regular seminars and retreats are offered yearly to the staff, Lemos says.

"This is the time and ground, from a deeper sense of their work," says hospital administrator Sr. Imelda Gilos, SSpS.

Edelsa Reyes, who has grappled with the temptation to seek a better life abroad, says she feels focused to learn from inbred talks the values that the nuns speak of often.

"If I did not open myself to these values when I was just starting, I could never be one of those unwed who go about their duties like a robot," she says.



NPA orders Mindoro mayoral bet out of town

CALAMBA, Laguna (PDI)—Rumble a day after losing bout for the vice-mayoral slot in Puerto Galera, the notorious New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Mindoro Oriental have ordered Mayor Eufemio Ramos, the mayor-in-waiting, to leave the town.

Ramos said he would follow the order to comply with the NPA's condition for his release.

In a mobile phone interview, Mayor Ramos said he was released by the rebels after complaining a few days before the May 14, 2004, elections. The rebels let him go when days later.

"This is my second time to be taken by the rebels. I don't want to ask my life again. For me I never my conscience if I'm dead," he said.

He did not say if he paid ransom to be freed.

Ramos said that he and his bodyguards were brought to the rebels in the hinterland where he was asked questions regarding his government.

He said the NPA rebels who took him were led by a Ka Dino.

Senior Inspector Richard Abad of Police Provincial Office in Mindoro Oriental identified Ka Dino as Inspector Sonny Lucion.

Come home, DFA tells OFWs in Iraq, Nigeria

By Tarra Quismundo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS has appealed to Filipinos in Nigeria and Iraq to consider Philippine embassies down if they want to come home because of the security crisis in those two countries.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said Filipino workers in the two countries can avail themselves of the government's repatriation program even if the state in Iraq wishes for him on the deployment of Filipino workers there.

"Even if you are undocumented, we will not prosecute. Just come home safe, everything is forgiven. And personal yourself, and we will take you out. It is dangerous to be in Iraq," said Foreign Secretary Romulo.

Romulo made the call following the death of a Filipino worker in a rocket attack in the US-controlled Green Zone in Baghdad and the abduction of eight Filipinos along with three Koreans from a Koreas-run power plant in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, last Thursday.

"Our message for always been that Iraq is a dangerous place for our OFWs... If anyone of you would like to come home, please try to find a way to contact your friends under who know how to contact our embassy," Romulo said at a press briefing on Friday.

He said the government had a continuing relocation repatriation program for Filipino workers in Iraq and that the embassy in Baghdad had been down to its skeleton staff to allow those who want to make this offer more attractive.

Romulo also issued a stern warning to Filipinos working in the critical Niger Delta States, an oil-rich area torn by conflict between government and the insurgent Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND). MEND were involved in an hour ago previous abduction involving the Koreans.

"There are the most critical areas. If you work in the areas... If you want to come home, please tell us. Either negotiate with your employers to come home or if they will not agree, we will provide for your fare to come home," he said.

"It is right, if this appeal you will accept in

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Messages

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TWO FOR THE (SLIMPY) ROAD AHEAD. Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay as of Friday night, suspended from office for 60 days, manages to put on a happy face as he gets all-out support from his constituents and people like Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo at the Makati City Hall. Ocampo himself was recently released on bail after he was charged by a Leyte judge with 11 counts of murder. RAFU GUZMAN

Binay: Thank you, GMA

From page A1

vote, Adel Tamano.

"The Filipino electorate will see that for what it is, and the backlash will only help the opposition cause," Tamano said.

Let Ombudsman explain

Malacañang, however, sought to distance itself from the new suspension order on Binay—the second in six months involving supposed ghost employees on the city payroll—and wants the Ombudsman to explain the case.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday said the matter was "strictly between the Ombudsman and Mayor Binay."

"But the Ombudsman owes it to the public to fully and convincingly explain why they believe they have a strong case against the mayor for allegedly hiring ghost employees and why they have to suspend him now," Bunye said.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Malacañang had nothing to do with the new case in the earning of the preventive suspension on Friday night.

He said Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno received a copy of the suspension order from the Ombudsman's office on Friday but that Puno's officials were able to locate Binay only late on Friday night.

"The O.S.G. is just executing a lawful order from the Ombudsman," Ermita said in Friday night. "Malacañang does not have to give any instruction [to Puno]."

The reserved effort to remove Binay from City Hall is a reprise of the attempt last October which he was able to foil through court order.

That case, filed by Binay's known political adversary, Roberto Brillantes, also alleged that the mayor and the entire city council maintained ghost employees.

Gordoncer's agreement

Interior Undersecretary Marlon Cortpus yesterday said he and Binay forged a gentlemen's agreement on Friday that the mayor would vacate City Hall on Monday and Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado would take over as acting mayor.

"We gave assurances that we will not take over City Hall this weekend, and he will voluntarily relinquish the office on Monday," Cortpus told reporters in the Sofitel Philippine Plaza Hotel, where he joined the Ombudsman in a convention of security agencies.

However, Cortpus said, Binay had been suspended since Friday night when he received the order.

Cortpus said he did not expect Binay to resign on their agreement. "Shame on him if he will not honor his word."

The DILG will not use force to evict Binay if, as he did in response to the first suspension order last October, he again barricades himself in his office on Monday, Cortpus said.

Anyway, if Binay insists on staying in City Hall, he will no longer be recognized as the mayor of Makati, Cortpus said. "His signature will not be honored."

Cortpus said it would be the acting mayor who would exercise power in Makati, and he could do this from his own office.

According to Cortpus, Binay should not make a fuss about the administrative case because if he wins another term as mayor, the case will be deemed moot. "If he wins, that will mean the administration [under] Gloria [arroyo] is tantamount to pardon by the electorate."

Cortpus also took exception to charges that the new suspension order constituted political harassment of Binay, who is one of the loud conveners of G33.

'Undeclared martial law'

But Binay apparently does not intend to go quietly.

"We will not turn our back on this suspension ... It's just a few days before the elections and they are threatening and harassing us," he told his supporters past midnight Friday.

"Think but once, my friends. I don't know how I can show my heart to you, but you know Jojo Binay...he knows to pay back what he owes; I admire you all," he said, adding:

"In the meantime, accept our gladness that, in just a few minutes, we have been declared as winners."

Yesterday, Binay and Makati were practically in a state of "undeclared martial law" as heavily armed police, the "illegal" suspension and the Bureau of Internal Revenue's seizure of Makati's assets in connection alleged unpaid taxes.

He also said trackloads of fully armed policemen have deployed to the city, particularly on major streets and near his home in Bonanza Subdivision.

Binay described the deployment of truckloads of policemen from the Southern Police District (SPD) as "overkill."

"Whenever there is conflict in the barangays arising from campaign-related activities, SPD policemen quickly rush to the scene," he said. "These policemen have no business meddling in incidents that should be handled by Makati policemen."

Said G33 senatorial candidate Loren Legarda: "The attempt to suspend Mayor Binay as the election campaign period is drawing to a close is a glaring example of political harassment. Worse, the government used to do it after office hours and during a Friday at that.

"I believe this incident will even strengthen the resolve of Mayor Binay's constituents to deliver him that landslide victory come May 14."

101 percent

What started as a tense stand-off late Friday night between policemen and Binay's supporters calmed into a political gig, with dancing growing as the time of "takbuhan" neared.

"My 99 percent might turn into 101 percent," Binay quipped in Filipino, referring to his wellspring of votes in the country's primary bastion district.

The mayor was dressed in a light blue shirt with the name Jojo Binay" embroidered on his right chest—a far cry from the military fatigues he wore during his days-long "resistance to the suspension order of October 2006.

More than 10 men pulled and shoved to keep the crowd, including members of the media, from coming too close, but Binay kept a calm demeanor and appeared unaffected by the tension.

Pagcor chair did it

Binay also alleged that Efraim Genuino, the chair of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., was behind the new suspension order.

Genuino denied his in a statement issued yesterday.

"In the first place, the suspension order issued by the Ombudsman resulted from an complaint by the City Hall of Makati, Binay's seat of power. How are we connected to that?" Genuino said.

He also said Binay should present the any government's records if he had done nothing wrong.

The city government's police, fiscals and lawyers are running for suspension and reelection to Makati's second district under the administration tick-

et. With reports from Donna Z. Bemudez and Rowley D. Jimenez

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, May 6, 2007
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2nd Reading: Revelation 21:1-5

Gospel: John 13:31-33, 34-35

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STILL SELLING AFTER ALL THESE YEARS. In her 80s, Nanay Curing, Senate President Manny Villar's mother, still runs a sari-sari store at BF Resort Village. When her rich and famous son suggested she retire, she scolded him: "If I don't do anything, I will grow weak." RODEL VELAYO

Nanay Curing won't let age get in the way of business

By Margie Quiroga-Espino

HIGH ATOP, THERE IS NO ROOM FOR IDLENESS for Nanay Curing.

Everyday she is up at 5 a.m. to open her little sari-sari store which looks like any other neighborhood store with sachets of shampoo, soap, coffee, biscuits and other chichirya hanging on its grilled front which has a small rectangular opening to transact business.

When her son suggested that she really didn't have to work anymore, he got a resentful look from her. "And what will I do?" she demanded, insisting that she would grow weak if she just sat around.

Almost every sun—even Senate President Manuel Villar—knows better than to argue with his mother.

Of course, Cecilia Batilo Villar got her way (although here in the only sari-sari store in BF Resort Village in Las Piñas that has security guards posted outside and a "yaya" standing by inside to watch over when she takes her mid-morning and early afternoon siesta break.)

This is not surprising for a woman who, in barely 18 years old, used to row a *paraw* (a small boat with a sail) from Bataan to Tondo, Manila, to sell seafood.

Bataan native

Born and raised in Orion, Bataan, she was only two months short of graduating from the Normal College when World War II broke out in the 1940s. To help support her family, she boldly set out to sea.

During the Japanese occupation, the seafood trade was an illegal activity that was sometimes punished with death. The Japanese had ordered all seafood turned over to them.

But as luck would have it, the Filipino official whose job it was to prevent this trade fell in love with her.

Pilipinito Inquezon Manuel H. Villar persevered the young, feisty Curing during her dating Bataan voyages—and eventually became her husband.

Buy and sell

She had school business sense. She said she did not bring money home to Bataan. Instead, she used the proceeds from the sale of her 50 Elite or so of seafood to buy goods that were in short supply in Bataan—things like cigarettes, sugar and flour.

The danger was always there. She has not forgotten that one time she was unable to bring her goods to Manila herself and those cousins had to bring them. The Japanese aboard them and they were never found.

She said they were told that the three were killed through water torture (water was pumped into their bodies through their mouths until they died). A friend found the parcels floating in the sea and took it back to Bataan.

After the war, she got a stall in the big wholesale market in Divisoria and continued to sell seafood.

It was there in Divisoria where her former waterways protector Villar popped up his courtship. He still worked for the Philcoa bureau and would visit her everyday after the market closed at noon.

Love stirs stall

Nanay Curing smiles when she recalls that her parents did not like Villar because he was from the Visayas (Iloilo) and they preferred her to marry another Tagalog like them.

But love prevailed. The two eloped.

It was not until her oldest daughter, Loredes, came that her parents took her back.

Those were hard times. She had no money to capitalize her seafood store, she said. Her trades would give her credit.

When her husband was offered a year-long scholarship to the United States, Nanay Curing says they were so poor that she had to pawn her sewing machine for P50 just to be able to send him off with some pocket money and a removal cigarettes for the long sea journey.

It was only after Villar's scholarship abroad that life improved a bit for Nanay Curing. After his return he was appointed director of the agriculture and secured concession coffee with much higher pay.

But one child came after another until they had nine.

Seafood supplier

Her husband eventually was able to buy a house in Navotas. She continued her seafood trade and maintained her stall in Divisoria.

Her big break came when young son Manny lent a hand in the marketing aspect. He had asked a classmate, whose family owned Williams Lines, if his mother could supply their seafood needs.

"They liked my prompt service and ordered more as well," Nanay Curing said.

Seeing bigger opportunities, she told daughter Lourdes to quit her job and go into vegetable trading. Soon another said daughter were supplying most of the food needs of William Lines, including eggs. Every week she was supplying produce in Manila Hotel.

The business grew. The Villar daughters eventually took over the trading business.

As money already knew, son Manny went to college at the University of the Philippines, got a Masters in Business Administration, set up a successful real estate business, married a banker, later becoming a congressman, a senator, Senate president.

In the '80s, she and her husband, who had retired from the government service, took a month downward cruise and travelled for months.

But after her travels and after moving into her current house, Nanay Curing felt one lost. That was when she decided to open the sari-sari store.

Husband Manuel has since passed away. She also lost two sons, both to leukemia.

She says her store rakes in about P5,000 a day with profits amounting to less than 10 percent or some P400, but says she is the day Nanay Curing does not use a calculator but does the numbers with pen and paper—just as she did during her seafood trading days.

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Herbal garden alive and well at QC Memorial Circle

FCA NUBA oversees the "Kalusugang Pangkabuhayan (Livelihood Garden)," which offers weekend seminars on raising pests, frogs and poultry and the propagation of crops, vegetables, medicinal-bearing trees as well as medicinal, decorative and culinary plants.

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE HERBAL GARDEN AND LIVELIHOOD Center started with the idea of growing medicinal plants in one's own backyard which has since turned into a multi-hectare plan of putting up homegrown businesses for ordinary people.

Ideally located at the heart of the Quezon Memorial Circle on Elliptical Road in Quezon City, the Herbal Garden and Livelihood Center—soon to be renamed the "Kalusugang Pangkabuhayan Gamitang Gubat"—that will catch the vistas of Quezon City Parks Development Foundation Inc. (QCPDFI) president Claudio Pitmen is converting parks into nurseries of herbs to cure and heal sting.

Ed Bahia, vice president for operations of Agri-Aqua Network International (AANI) who oversees the venture, says the idea of growing medicinal herbs was the spark plug which ignited the whole project to life.

From the idea broadcaster Enzo Recto's "Bahia to Pare," the project looks at the diverse uses medicinal purposes, eventually finding a place at the Quezon Memorial Circle.

"Pitmen developed the herbal garden which started from Pare-ish's 'Bahia to Pare' project. It was only on-line. At first we decided to assign the herbal garden with the livelihood center and it was also then that Pitmen asked us to take over supervision of the whole project," Bahia said.

Pitmen explained, "When you say herbal, that's only medicinal. Here you have plants for culinary use, decorative plants and trees. There's also regular weekend seminars on easy-to-do, green and pigs."

Remedy for poverty

He stressed that the project's objective was to provide QMC visitors with a remedy to "learn to earn." "It also offers an alternative to people who may want to try their hand in the field of agriculture as a remedy to reduce poverty.

"What's happening in our country now is people tend to randomize as their minds that they are poor. The mind is like a ball. Whatever you think becomes true to you. So if you always think that you are poor, that you will be poor for life, you'll be poverty-ridden until you die. So you must have a positive outlook," Pitmen explained.

He added, "To help curb the issue of people, give them not bread but something to make bread with."

Pitmen pointed out that under "Kalusugang Pangkabuhayan," they are also empowering an alternative scan for ordinary plants. "We teach them how to make coffee out of rice and sugar out of coconut, different uses for ordinary things," she said.

The president of the QCPDFI is being proud of the benefits of herbal medicine through the "Bahia to Pare" project. Through her weekly radio program which airs now dubbed on Sundays, she promotes herbal medicine as a natural alternative to still-only-developed drugs.

Useful list

Pitmen also disseminates a list of herbal plants, their medicinal properties and how to prepare them in treating diseases and other ailments—ranging from colds and cough, headache, fever flu, diarrhea, stomach ache, rheumatism, asthma, animal bites, abnormal blood pressure to kidney and heart diseases. "I have printed 50,000 copies of the list and sent most both requested it and distributed it to all their constituents. For now taking sambong for my kidneys—only two bowls."

Bahia said the herbal garden project of the QCPDFI and its eventual transformation into a one-stop livelihood center suits AANI's thrust and main objective of agricultural technology transfer. "We saw the necessity of equipping farmers with modern technology when we started going around through our agri-learning sessions on the invitation of local officials," he explained.

The knowledge that the country is an "unexplored agricultural country" has prompted AANI to not only concentrate on educational seminars but also other people interested in venturing into agriculture on a small scale.

"We always advise those who participate in our seminars to know what agricultural or aqua-culture field they want to relate to because that there will reply what they are doing," he said, pointing out that most successful farmers are hobbyists or weekend farmers rather than agricultural graduates.

"Before, it was embarrassing to admit to being a farmer. Most lawyers and businessmen are around to her working on their farms. Instead of going to golf courses, they farm. There is more money inside. It's cheaper and healthier," Bahia said.

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GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Gerry Lirio

SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2007

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"I WILL SUBMIT THAT OTHER DOING abroad is one of the more salutary forms of birth control, and as the women our party of OFWs leave and become more educated about globalization, this raises our population control problems."

ALBULO Macatuno, 70, president, April 1986

This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be found to support their life for their families. These are their stories.

She plays sound of music in a sleepy town in Brunei

WITH HER TWO: Dora's students in piano and voice: Bruna and Julia Weisser in Kuala Belait

She accepted the job to teach music in Kuala Belait to earn more and return home after a few years. But now, she wants her family to live with her in this oil-rich country

By Margaux C. Ortiz

WHEN YOUNG MUSIC teacher Maria Cecilia Algery-Rasonable first arrived in the quiet town of Kuala Belait in Brunei, she was struck by a strange sight.

"There was the first time I saw a burning sky!" Rasonable said in an interview with the Inquirer, recalling how amazed she was at what she saw.

Later, she learned that the fire had something to do with the final and the process of extracting oil and gas, Kuala Belait's main industry.

"That was the first thing I noticed here, apart from the very dry soil," Rasonable said.

She was also surprised at how peaceful the city was, contrary to what she had expected when she left the Philippines two years ago.

"I thought I would see in Brunei what I had seen in movies showing foreign cities," Rasonable said, laughing. "But the high-rise buildings, the busy shopping malls and the noisy streets were missing from Kuala Belait."

However, like any other Filipinos in any part of the globe, Rasonable was able to adjust to her surroundings quickly. And it helped that she lived with other Filipinos who also work as music teachers in the same school that employed her.

"I always thought that I would be involved in music, either performing as a musician or teaching it to others," Rasonable said. "But never in my wildest dreams did I think I would reach Brunei to do this."

Family of musicians

Born to a family of musicians, this Bicol native learned to love music at a very young age.

When her unexpected decision to take up more communication in faraway Manila was disapproved by her father, Rasonable ended up with a music degree from Sta. Isabel University in Naga City.

"Despite having wanted to take up another course when I was in my senior year in high school, I never regretted choosing another career path...though I guess it was more expected, with my family background and all," she said with a smile.

Ever since she was still in college, Rasonable's exceptional musical talent enabled her to sing a job at the provincial capital of Camarines Sur. She became the lead singer of the UST string ensemble under the Hotel Heritage Foundation.

While she was singing with the UST string ensemble, Rasonable also taught at the Colegio del Sagrado Corazon in Naga City as a music teacher.

Rasonable's enthusiasm and dedication to teaching music to elementary and high school students did not escape the attention of the school staff. A subsequent—and unexpected—invitation by one of the school's directors abroad was a change for her life forever, she said.

"I immediately considered accepting the job, thinking that it would give me a chance to see from performing but also let me continue teaching, which I love doing so much," Rasonable said.

On April 21, 2005, Rasonable and another colleague set off for Kuala Belait, where she was to teach voice, violin and piano at the Rhythmic Arts music school. "I was, of course, sad and scared, but also very excited at the same time," she said. The music teacher expressed to be "culture-shocked" when her prospective employer assured her that she would not be working alone in Brunei. "It's a country as far as theirs, I half expected to see people in shorts and sandals walking in the streets," she said.

But the shocking contrast that Rasonable was not as hard with the presence of a large foreign population in the country. Australians, New Zealanders, Dutch, British, Indian and Filipino influences blending with the local culture.

Rasonable said that working with other Filipinos teachers in Rhythmic Arts (owned by a fellow Bicolana, Aileen Rosales) helped her cope with her homesickness.

Interaction with locals

"We all live in a house just across our school," she said, explaining that the proximity likewise helped them survive the painful hour both coming from the east and emanating from the ground.

"Here in Brunei, all the houses are air-conditioned. It is not a luxury here, unlike in the Philippines, but a necessity," she said.

From Mondays to Thursdays, Rasonable and three other colleagues teach music lessons to mostly children of expatriates. She said their schedules start at the afternoon and end in early evenings because their students went to regular schools in the mornings.

"My students' age range from 5 to 50, but most of them are from seven to 12 years old," she said.

It is this exposure to children from other cultures that Rasonable's interaction with the actual locals themselves.

"But the times I've met and talked with some of the locals have been pleasant experiences," she said, adding somewhat that most of the time she carries them for their comfortable lives.

Rasonable said that Brunei citizens received many privileges from their Sultan including their houses, cars and even their laptops.

"I always marvel at how rich this country is compared to ours," she said. "How you just have to work and save, because the cost of living is so low."

She said there were no taxes in Brunei, which enabled everyone to buy practically anything they needed. With just one schilling, she said, one could already have his fill in a decent restaurant.

She also said that her monthly salary range of P52,000 to P53,000 in Brunei has greatly helped her family back home, especially her 4-year old child, Dominic.

"I was able to send P5,000-P10,000 a month back home as a private school teacher," she recalled.

On Sundays, Rasonable explores the town on foot with her colleagues. She has become used in the sleepy town, she said, which is an hour and a half away from the busier capital city of Bandar Seri Begawan.

Plenty of Filipinos

The Filipino community, Rasonable noted, is not as active in this Brunei town as it is in other foreign countries.

"There are plenty of Filipinos here, mostly working as domestic helpers, construction workers and maintenance," Rasonable said.

Most of the store helpers and salesladies in the town are also Filipinos, she said. But their interactions are limited to simple "hellos."

But still, she is grateful for their presence. "It is still given not comfort that there are people here who could speak the same language as I do."

She added that the Catholic chapels in Kuala Belait are usually filled with her own countrymen on Sundays.

"We try to participate in the few activities we have as a community here, like singing during the Philippine Independence Day celebrations," Rasonable said.

Once or twice a month, the young teacher and her friends at Rhythmic Arts travel to nearby Malaysia to unwind and to get their toothpicks.

"Travelling helps us take our minds off our homesickness for a while," she declared, adding that she regularly spends a lot to call phone calls just to talk to her family back home.

But other than that, Rasonable thinks that she can work in Brunei for a long time.

"The pay is worth the work. And if there's a way to take my family here to live with me, that would be perfect!" she added.

Pinay restaurateur finally finds home in Kuala Lumpur

By Cora Llarena
Contributor

DURING HER FIRST EVER EXCITING years in Kuala Lumpur, mopping floor, washing dishes and serving her Chinese employer from one side and hers sending were not reaching the right parties.

Then there was the Chinese mother-in-law of her employer-master and gentle parents. Tan Chee Hong, in Malaysia. Suspicious the Filipina of ignoble means, tries against her son, the elder brother freshly asked Manalo Hwa not yet a Yuki to name his pieces...then leave him alone. Manalo remembers answering back, answering her dignity intact, "I don't need your money. I will soon find a job. Only a word from your son can send me back to the Philippines."

Ironically, landing a hardest was the furthest thing that Manalo-Tan had in mind when she left for Malaysia in 1991, after a three-year stint as a domestic helper in Sabah from 1987-1990. She was actually anxious to get away from the unpleasant household ordeal, she believed, would resort to physical abuse every time he was drunk. Her escape was accomplished on a person that she was sticking her mother in Zamboanga for three days; when Manalo-Tan left, not even the her old lady would be giving her the P5,000 she needed to have for Malaysia and a possibility of work and a better life.

Bridging 2 worlds

After 15 years, Manalo-Tan has happily bridged those two worlds, and now manages the Bhai Kee Restaurant situated in Jalan Sirat, a tiny strip of dinner-line bar/become a food haven for tourists who wish to sample exotic and home-grown cuisine. She runs the multi-cultural staff of 11—composed of Thais, Indians and Malaysians—with her husband. Tan's mother has become friendly to her after their marriage and the birth of her two sons, ages 12 and 13.

Her children from her first husband have settled with their own families in Ipil and Cotabato on. A couple of them had visited her in Malaysia and one even tried working there on a sudden before deciding that homesickness was a price he could not pay for future prosperity (still, those few months he was a long-awaited and fondly-nurtured rendezvous for Manalo-Tan whose absence at home made her the subject of idle gossip. That the days around with other men was one cruel and unbounded accusation.

Manalo-Tan's voice still breaks when she recounts her son's words before resuming home in the Philippines: "Mom, now I understand you. You're suffering here for us, I see it with my own eyes."

Sleepless nights were the norm for Manalo-Tan and her husband when they were first starting to move up. The restaurant was open from 6 p.m. to 4 a.m. The 10 eight-seater round tables that spilled from the cozy interiors on the street sidewalks were easily and quickly filled by American, German, Italian and African visitors who roamed to taste their famous barbecues and mouth-filling seafood entrees. The Tans would have only a few hours to clean, shop in the market for supplies, cook and prepare for the customers until dawn when they would catch a few hours of sleep.

Manalo-Tan says that it's her husband Tan Chee Hong who is the culinary whiz. Similar to the American rite of passage, Malaysians are encouraged to leave their homes to build their own lives independently once they reach the age of 18. Tan Chee Hong worked in the different restaurants and developed a cooking thumb that could concoct the most popular Chinese and Malaysian delicacies. Manalo-Tan learned her trade from watching him and adding her own spin.

Support for four kids

Like all OFWs, Manalo-Tan occasionally sends financial support to the four children whose growth, education and development she could not witness first-hand. Sad. One did she keep her first family secret from Tan Chee Hong when he started courting her. "I already have four children back in the Philippines who are all in school. Can you take that?" she remembered telling him. To her pleasant surprise, he was not a prude—and would even fund for additional funds out of his own pocket.

Those days, Manalo-Tan and her spouse do not have to keep the same long hours, given a greater number of staff and a mother-in-law who's all too willing to take care of her children. The family lives in a townhouse in Ipoh (which incurs monthly dues to the bank) and the boys go to good schools. Occasionally, Manalo-Tan indulges her fondness for jewelry and, with Tan Chee Hong, plays the stock-markets in Manila.

One more dream

The days when she landed in a hut built of "pajug and kahoy" are memories that remain a powerful remembrance. Manalo-Tan is the first to acknowledge her good fortune. Today, I would ask myself when I would get enough money and get a huge house. When would I ever get to live in there? When I see jewelry in other people, I would ask myself when I'd get to have one. Now, at 43, God's mercy all of those came to me."

One more dream remains—and that is to revisit her Philippine-based family again and share with them the blessings she has received. Her last visit to the country was in 2002. Maybe this time around, she muses that will welcome her, aside from her children, will be summer and more open.

JANE MANALO-TAN with friends just outside her restaurant in Malaysia

First votes cast as France chooses president

PARIS—THE FIRST VOTES WERE TO be cast Saturday for rival candidates Nicolas Sarkozy and Segolene Royal, as citizens in France's overseas territories start the ball rolling in the country's hard-fought presidential election process.

Voters in French Guiana, the Caribbean islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe and the tiny archipelago of Saint Pierre and Miquelon off Canada's coast are going to the polls this early in order to avoid problems caused by the time difference.

In mainland France official campaigning ended Friday at midnight, with Saturday a day for reflection with family and friends ahead of Sunday's vote.

The last opinion polls before a midnight ban confirmed a lead for Nicolas Sarkozy, the 52-year-old right-winger who has promised a radical agenda of tax cuts and work incentives, over his Socialist party (PS) rival Segolene Royal, 53.

The two opponents came first and second in the April 22 multi-candidate round of the election with 31.2 percent of the vote for Sarkozy and 25.9 percent for Royal.

The second round campaign has focused on winning the 6.8 million votes—16% percent of the vote—who chose the defeated centrist Francois Bayrou in round one.

Holding out the possibility of a future alliance with the left, Bayrou says Royal or policy discussions a week ago and later said that he would potentially not vote for Sarkozy. But it was far from clear if his supporters would follow his advice.

A key moment of the campaign was Wednesday's televised debate between Sarkozy and Royal, which was watched by more than 20 million viewers.

Royal showed an unexpectedly aggressive streak in the debate—at one point accusing Sarkozy of "political irresponsibility" for his policies on the handicapped. The attacks were high praise from supporters, but polls subsequently showed more voters found Sarkozy the more convincing. With the campaign drawing to a close, Royal launched her strongest personal assault on Sarkozy Friday, saying his election would provoke violence in the high-immigration suburbs that were the center of the 2005 riots.

Referring to his "dangerous candidacy," Royal said she had a "responsibility to warn an electorate the risks ... regarding the violence and hesitation that will be triggered across the country. Everyone knows it' but no one says it. It is a kind of taboo."

Royal was immediately rebuked by Sarkozy's campaign headquarters, which described her remarks as "irresponsible and unacceptable." AFP

Beating global warming costs little, says UN

BRUSSELS—HUMANS MUST MAKE SWEEPing cuts in greenhouse gas emissions in the next 30 years to keep global warming in check, but it would cost only a tiny fraction of world economic output, a major UN report said on Friday.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said keeping the temperature rise within 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 F) would cost only 0.12 percent of annual gross domestic product.

"It's a low premium to pay to reduce the risk of major climate damage," Bill Hare, a Greenpeace activist who coordinated the report said Monday after marathon talks that ran over their four-day schedule to finalize the document.

The report "shows that it's economically and technically feasible to make deep emission reductions sufficient to limit warming to 2 degrees," he said.

To keep within that limit, which scientists and the European Union say is needed to stave off disastrous climate changes, carbon dioxide emissions must to fall 50 to 85 percent by 2050, said the report, due dated in a review.

However, technological advances, particularly in more efficient energy use and production, meant such targets were within reach, it said.

It stressed the use of nuclear, solar and wind power, more energy-efficient buildings and lighting, as well as capturing and storing carbon dioxide spewed from coal-fired power stations and oil and gas rigs.

But a UK environmental official reported some opinion detailed in the report for cutting emissions as too costly. Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

India explosion kills 15

NEW DELHI—At least 15 workers were feared killed in an explosion Saturday at a gelatin manufacturing plant in northern India, a news report said. The blast near Ghazipur city was so powerful that a three-storey building inside the factory complex collapsed, the Press Trust of India news agency said quoting unnamed police officials. "The explosion occurred early Saturday when there were about 30 workers inside the factory that manufactures explosives," the PTI report said. Police have so far recovered two dead bodies from the debris, while two injured workers were rescued and taken to a nearby hospital for treatment, it said. AP

Roller coaster accident in Japan

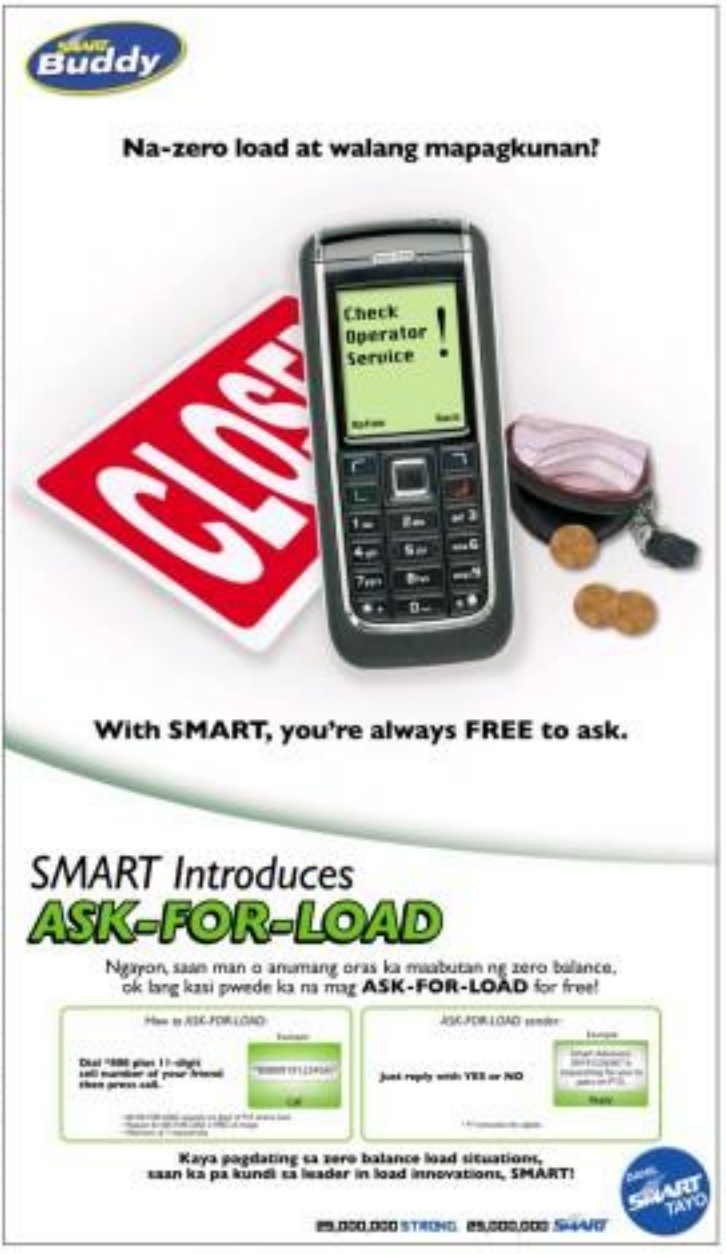
TOKYO—A roller coaster travelling up to 13 km per hour hit a pedestrian at an amusement park in western Japan on Saturday, killing one person and injuring 21 others, officials said. Osaka police official Kazuhiro Tanaka said a woman was killed. Two people suffered serious injuries, Kyodo News agency reported. An arm on one of the six cars broke upon the accident at Expoland in Osaka, 400 km west of Tokyo, Kyodo reported. It happened amid Japan's "Golden Week" holiday, when many families pack amusement parks and other tourist sites. The park was closed following the accident, according to park officials quoted by Kyodo. AP

22 dead as Haitian boat sinks

MIAMI—At least 22 people died and dozens more were missing after a sailboat packed with Haitian migrants capsized on Friday in shark-infested waters while being towed by a police boat, the US Coast Guard reported. Dozens of the bodies reportedly appeared to have been skinned up by sharks. "There are the reports (confirmed by Turks and Caicos police," the base added those leaving the boat said 500 Coast Guard (USCG) spokesperson Lula Diaz. The waters of the Atlantic archipelago are teeming with sharks. A total of 13 people were rescued and 22 bodies were counted after the boat capsized early Friday about 200 miles off Providenciales, one of the Turks and Caicos Islands. AFP

Ukraine rivals agree on early polls

KIEV—Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych agreed today to hold early parliamentary elections, signaling an end to a bitter power struggle in the ex-Soviet republic. "Today we reached agreement to schedule an holding early elections," Yushchenko said after meeting with Yanukovych in Kiev. the president's office said in a statement. Ukraine has been rocked by crisis since April 2 after the Russian-backed Yanukovych defied an order from pro-Western Yushchenko to dissolve parliament and hold early elections. No date was announced for elections. AFP



The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibarra

Kenyan plane with 115 people on board crashes

NAIROBI—A KENYA AIRWAYS AIRLINER WITH 115 people on board crashed Saturday after taking off from Douala airport in Cameroon on a flight to Nairobi, an aviation official said.

"The plane has crashed," the official with the Kenyan Civil Aviation Authority, who asked not to be named, told AFP.

A top government official told AFP: "We have located the plane ... and we cannot talk about it." The plane, a Boeing 737-800 carrying 106 passengers, eight crew members and a flight engineer, was due to land in Nairobi on Saturday at 10:55 a.m.

Air traffic controllers picked up a distress signal from the missing Kenya Airways airliner just after it took off from Douala airport in Cameroon, an aviation source said.

The signal was picked up by satellite at 2 a.m., a source close to the Agency for the Safety of Aerial Navigation in Africa and Asia (ASECNA) said.

Two Cameroonian army helicopters on Saturday began searching a vast area south of the last known contact with the aircraft.

Cameroonian authorities have set up two emergency centers, one in Douala and the other in Yaounde, to coordinate search operations.

Flight KQ 507 was flying from Abidjan in Ivory Coast to Nairobi via Douala, in Cameroon.

The chief executive officer for Kenya Airways, Titus Naikuni, earlier told a news conference in Nairobi that the aircraft had failed to land.

"The last message from the aircraft was received in the control tower (in Douala) immediately after take off. After, the tower has contact with the aircraft. So far, no one has been able to establish contact," Naikuni said. AFP

Paris Hilton gets 45-day jail term

LOS ANGELES—A JUDGE SENTENCED a shocked and tearful Paris Hilton to 45 days in jail on Friday, ruling that the hotel heiress violated her probation for a previous traffic offense by knowingly driving without a valid license.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Sauer rejected Hilton's defense that she didn't realize her license was suspended and ordered the 26-year-old socialite to report to a county detention facility on June 5.

Hilton stops and lets reporters Kathy Griffin at the prosecutor, "You're pathetic," as the packed courtroom burst into laughter.

The stunning decision capped a two-hour hearing in which prosecutors argued that Hilton was flaunting her trust as the court and seeking to be placed above the law, while defense lawyers said she was being singled out for harsh treatment because of her celebrity.

Taking the witness stand in her own defense, the star of the reality TV show "The Simple Life" testified that she was unaware her driving privileges had been completely suspended at the time police stopped her and impounded her car on Jan. 27.

Hilton said her publicist, Elliot Mintz, had told her she was permitted to drive for work-related reasons after the first 30 days of her license suspension. Mintz, however, said that he advised on what he had said.

But the judge said he did not believe Hilton, pointing to a notice she had received from a police officer, and had signed, stating another traffic stop in January.

He said Hilton had "completely ignored" that letter, which she had carried in her purse, his car stereo, and another license suspension notice sent to her office address by the Department of Motor Vehicles that Hilton said she never saw.

"In my opinion, there's no doubt that she knew that her license had been suspended," the judge said. "She doesn't look at her mail, her personal assistant never goes through it either ... I think she just wanted to disregard everything that was said and continued to drive, no matter what." Reuters

HOTEL heiress Paris Hilton leaves the Los Angeles Municipal Court on May 4. AFP/VALERIE MACON

Fossilized remains of dinosaur found

BUENOS AIRES—PALEONTOLOGISTS announced a flesh-eating dinosaur some 150 million years old in southern Argentina with all its parts in place, the first time such a beast has been found intact, one of the finders told AFP on Friday.

The seven-meter (23-foot) tall, two-legged dinosaur, dubbed the Cerabottani, was found headless with parts of its jaw and head showing in rock near the village of Cerro Condor in Patagonia, at a site where paleontologists had been working for two years.

"It is an unprecedented discovery. It is the first time in the world that a carnivorous dinosaur of the Middle Jurassic period has been found fully painted," said Pablo Puerta, a paleontologist at the Egidio Feruglio museum in the town of Trelew. AFP

Allies threaten to quit Olmert's government

JERUSALEM—EHUD OLMERT'S PROSPECTS of remaining Israel's prime minister faced a new threat on Friday as coalition allies pushed for their party to quit his government in a move that could trigger a snap election.

Just after 100,000 or more protesters packed the main square in Tel Aviv on Thursday evening to demand that he go, Olmert's aides again insisted he would stay on to fix grave failings identified by an official inquiry that delivered a withering verdict this week on his handling of last year's inconclusive war.

With his own foreign minister calling for his resignation, many see Olmert's rejection as unlikely. Earlier reports that from the Winograd Commission's inquiry in the coming weeks as well as challenges from within his own, centrist Kadima party and its Labor coalition allies are all but bound to spell his end.

Labor is in the midst of its own power struggle ahead of a leadership election on May 28 that seems likely to unseat Amir Peretz, who as defense minister shared much of the blame with Olmert for failures in the war against Hezbollah last summer.

Several prominent Labor figures have called for a shake-up in government and, if it were realized, that seems the surest way to unseat Olmert.

"We will make an effort to build a new coalition and a new government. If we won't be able to do so, we will have to have early elections," Labor lawmaker Ophir Pines-Paz told Reuters.

"It is not the best option but it's a better option than to stay with the present government."

Olmert's spokesperson, Mor Dian, said the prime minister had no intention of giving way despite the mass protests. "The best way is face the challenges, and for the better of Israel, is for the prime minister to stay in his position," Reuters

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BAUTISTA: Beating favorite

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Fax: (632) 896-6214 (Sports) E-mail: pi_sports@inquirer.com.ph

MEDINA: Also undefeated

Bautista set to go boom vs Medina

Fireworks explode during weigh-in

By Edwin L. Lagumbay
Contributor

LAS VEGAS—UNDEFEATED Philippine boxing sensation Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista rests his mouth as a fallen world boxing idol, he takes on a similarly unvanquished Argentinean Sergio Manuel Medina in a 12-round clash at the MGM Grand Garden Arena Saturday (Sunday in Manila).

The bout, one of the three in the pay-per-view telecast of "The World Awaits" card headlined by the Oscar De La Hoya-Floyd Mayweather Jr. world title bout (see related story on A30), will reward the winner a crack at the World Boxing Organization super bantamweight (junior featherweight) crown held by Mexican Daniel Perez De Leon.

The power-punching Bautista (22-0) is heavily favored over the hard-nosed Argentine (28-4), Bautista's 17 abbreviated wins translate to a 77 percent knockout ratio while Medina's 16 KOs represent only a 57 percent knockout rate.

At the MGM Sportsbook, Bautista's status was solidified further as he moved from a minus 200 favorite to a minus 220, while Medina was tabbed a plus 260 underdog.

This means a $500 bet on the 28-year-old Filipino will win only $200 while a $100 wager on Sir Loon will earn $260.

At yesterday's weigh-in supervised by the Nevada State Athletic Commission, Bautista and Medina, nicknamed "Sheriff" both easily made the 122 lb weight limit then almost came to blows.

'Bazooka' battles Mexican

Another Filipino, AJ "Bazooka" Banal, will fight Mexico's Juan Alberto Rosas in a 138-round junior featherweight clash, but the fight is not part of the televised portion of the event, according to MBC/DZBB.

Banal, an 18-year-old southpaw entering his 13th win against a draw, topped the scales at 128, while his opponent came in at 132.

Bautista didn't force at Bautista during the weigh-in and the Filipino responded by pushing his rival. Cooler heads immediately intervened to prevent matters from getting worse.

The little commotion happened after the unrevealed De la Boya-Mayweather weigh-in in front of 7,000 fans.

Both Bautista and Medina will be wearing Cleto Reyes gloves, the so-called "punchers gloves" that is perceived to give the hard-hitting fighters an advantage.

Bautista is fighting for the fifth time in the US while this outing is the first for Medina outside of his country.

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WELLINGTON: Gone-to-court employee over triathlon champion.

Briton takes right road, tops Subic triathlon

By Jasmine W. Payo

SUBIC—JUST THREE HOURS TO BAGUIO, CHINE-time Wellington found herself in the pressroom of her current facility, the 30-year-old triathlete threw the gloves down.

Wellington, a newly turned pro from Great Britain, finished on her winning performance on the Subic leg to capture the elusive Ironman title in the 13th Subic Bay International TRIATHLON here yesterday at the Subic Bay Freeport.

Entering the morning hour, Wellington completed the hilly bike course more than five minutes ahead of the pack and went on to ride the 1.5K swim-40K bike-10K run event in two hours, three minutes and 43 seconds.

It was a satisfying triumph for Wellington, who found herself needing to choose between being a full time athlete or a government employee.

"I've been working and training at the same time, but I thought the only way I can reach the heights that I want is to race full time," said Wellington, who recently quit as a member of the British government's international development policy body.

"I'm the biker (Org). I just decided to go and bike as hard as I could. The hill is my strongest point."

Nakashima Chie, a Japanese telephone operator, finished second over four minutes behind Wellington in 5:08:56.

The 32-year-old Chie, ranked 92 in the world, topped the water leg in 36 minutes and 58 seconds, before the fifth-ranking Wellington made up the lost ground in the bike race.

Alec Sharp of Australia came off a major injury to complete her first race in eight months for a third-place time of 5:14:03.

"I shattered my collarbone in a race in Canada so I had no expectations," noted Sharp. "Whatever comes is just a bonus. Im happy with the race, but I'm too concerned."

Elmer Lasno, the best Filipino finisher at seventh, came in 24 minutes behind Wellington at 5:27:49.

"I would have wanted to race more to train, but I think I still have a good chance of joining the SEA Games," said Lasno, who also came in second in the under-23 age category.

Fellow countryman Jonathan Cuibin Lim got near-cute minutes behind the 17-year old Lasno while placing eighth at 5:39:03.

The event was the second of three qualifying races for the national team's squads for the Thailand SEA Games in December.

The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, however, failed to finish the race. After keeping pace with Lasno and Langit, the 2005 SEA Games medalist dropped out after suffering a lamenting injury.

Narvasa new NCAA commish

In Huddle

Beth Celis

IF IT HAD BEEN anybody else who made the offer, Chito Narvasa would have probably turned it down right away.

But it was Jose Ma. (Joe) Rufino who had presented Chito with the NCAA overseer, assembly to the former PBA coach, and so Chito had to stop and think long and hard.

In the end, however, family friend who for friend he is the right person for the job, being a star collegiate star and top executive exec. Chito had to consider the offer with seriously.

Even if he thinks he has no coach worth in his hands and might not have more for it.

The Ateneo de Manila cronies the Jose Rizal University, one of the NCAA's member teams, which is this coach's host.

* * *

Chito, who is currently head of the Basketball Coaches Association of the Philippines (BCAP), is naturally a product of the NCAA.

He played three seasons for the Blue Eagle basketball team and another four for the Eagles while the school was still a member of the NCAA. Ateneo then moved to the UAAP in 1979, a year after Chito's last season.

His junior team won one title while his senior squad captured the NCAA championship twice.

In essence, Chito is a product of the NCAA, which he is about to oversee when his appointment becomes official since he has decided to accept Tito Choi's offer.

* * *

One of those candidates the PBA coaches had as commissioner finds in 2001, Chito succinctly but won't communicate Emilio Tito" Fernandez, who died of a heart attack last April.

His formal appointment is expected to be announced this coming week.

Meanwhile, in the UAAP side, a report has it that the choice to Chito's UAAP counterpart has been narrowed down to ex-Ateneo Dan Garcia of Santo Tomas alumni, four-year champion coach Ben Del Rosario and Ed Cordero. One of the two will replace Elmer Yanga who served the league last year UAAP 2006 champion, a hosting this year's UAAP.

* * *

Another appointment expected to be announced next week is that of Patrick "Pato" Gregorio as PAP-SBP executive director.

The selection and nomination committee headed by Director Ely Capanzo comes tomorrow, May 7, "so you select and recommend," according to Ely. Sonny among the short list of names already include Gregorio, Ateneo Blue Eagles coach Norman Black, and Rajon Jones crones Cecilio Pedro and Ricky Palou, Pedro Alfonso from Cantonese and Pato who was nominated by no less than the BAP-SBP president himself, Manny V. Pangilinan.

* * *

From what I know, only two candidates have been seriously considered for the coveted position: Jun Bernardino and Gregorio.

Jun and Pato are both products of the first society of the Philippines, and few people know this are compadres too.

And in the interest of one of Jun's kids.

"He's a very close family friend," said Boy. "He used to give us tickets to the PBA when he was the executive director here. Me, brothers and I (Pinoy and Allan) were so thrilled to watch the games."

Officially only four names are on the list of nominees. Unofficially however, the chairmen of a television conglomerate executive ply pushing for Cipto Guevarra, a lawyer and former MBA CEO, commissioner while a group also within was betting for former PBA coach and UAAP commissioner Joe Lipa.

UST, Ateneo cross paths in Filoil tilt

Beermen oppose Chandler, Giants

PETER Jun Simon of Purefoods tries to get past the defense of Coca-Cola headed Joseph Yeo in their game Friday night. The Tigers won, 89-77.

Badminton winners get RP pool slots

By Marc Anthony Reyes

National wushu event unearths potential star

Tagaytay City hosts poker qualifying tournament

FEU, La Salle trounce Nike caging rivals

FAR EASTERN UNIVERSITY'S LA SALLE AND University of the Philippines handled their respective rivals in the 2007 Nike Summer League basketball tournament at the FEU gym yesterday.

FEU subdued National University 75-61, to post its fifth straight win and clinch a quarterfinal berth in the tourney.

Mac Belo led topscorer with 15 points for the Tamaraws, who are now facing handled by coach Glen Capacio.

Jason Castro led the Bulldogs with 17 points.

La Salle Taft demolished Divine College, 128-90, for its third straight win to sweep E, while UP dashed UMAK (Lumajon University of Santo Tomas, 78-76, for its first win in three outings.

PLA member Ben Mallolos led the Archers of coach Franz Pumaren with 16 points.

Seven other players scored in double figures for the Taft-based school with Hyram Bagtas topping scoring 14 points and Sagunbenan scoring Mario Bolivar, team Bedtag 12 points. Wilmar Cruz point guard Aquino added 11 and Rich Go, Jimar Mangahas and Brian Hul dropped in 10 points apiece.

Former San Sebastian standout Mike Glasgow carried the fight for Olivarez with 24 points, followed by Ralph Rigrala with 16.

Jay Aghanyan and Mark Lopez combined for 27 points for UP.

PCU Dragon drowned San Beda-Alabang, 69-55, in another season encounter.

Julius Carlo Bravo scored 20 points, Mark to Escobar added 15 and Jerwel Buenaventura took found 12 for PCU Dragon.

In juniors action, UE edged San Beda-Alabang, 84-81, for its third win in five outings.

Adrian Santos led the Pages with 27 points, followed by Jerie de Guzman with 18 points.

In other junior games, La Salle Zobel edged PCU, 59-51, and PCU downed Adamson, 79-67. David Webb fired 19 points for the Growlers, who posted their fourth straight win in as many outings.

Castro triple gives Harbour solo lead

By Marc Anthony Reyes

JASON CASTRO HIT A RELIEF-BEATING THREE-POINTER TO GIVE Harbour Centre its a dramatic 72-70 triumph over Toyota Balintawak and the sole lead in the 2007 PBL Unity Cup yesterday at the arena in San Juan.

DON DON Hilanon (right) of Hinabol drives for a shot against Francis Bernardi Jones of Magnolia during their first half action at Arena San, San Juan City.

The shifty off-guard, who finished a rally that saw the Batang Pier reign over a 67-63 lead by the Road Kings, struck with the game's biggest basket after Patrick Cabahug had tied the contest with four seconds left, 70-all, ironically with another triple.

"It is because of their maturity that we were able to win this game," said coach Jorge Gallent of the Batang Pier. "We again banked on the team's never-say-die attitude which has never changed."

Harbour finished the first round of the eliminations with a dazzling 9-1 win-loss card while Toyota Balintawak slipped to 3-3.

Buried three under disabled by second straight win by downing San Miguel Beermen, 77-62.

PLA duo Ryan Reyes delivered for the Super Bombers with 20 points, including seven in the third that gave them a 57-49 lead going into the final 10 minutes.

"He's an excellent guard, a big hammer," said Coach Gamboa after the game. "But, we still have to play harder to win some games so that we can remain contending."

The Road Kings bounced on their way to victory with a four-point lead going into the last nine minutes but, in the words of Gallent himself, "threw it down the drain."

Toyota left into a rush of errors down the stretch even as Lanete took up the cudgels for Harbour when it mattered most.

The Brewers saw Mbanner's wound up-and-wide the Super Bombers at 2-4 despite getting inspired plays from Joel Chan, who finished with 15 points. Both starter are scheduled to meet again when they renewed rematch today.

Harbour Centre
Fine Lanete
MISSION CENTRE (78—Alfa 0) Cortez 12, Lanete 9, Dowdell 8, Jose 8, Sargosa 7, Mayo 6, Capili 5, Fernandez 2, Alonzo 2, Reyes 1, Wilmore 0)

TOYOTA BALINTAWAK (70—Jose 22, Bumgarner 14, Tiam 10, Cabahug 10, Agustin 5, Cabahug 4, Espiritu 4, Tiamzon 2, Bitoy 0) Ramos 5, Capuno 0, Tan 0, Tambeahon 0, Gumarang)

Quarters: 15-17, 35-31, 52-52, 72-70.

Second Game
MAGNOLIA (62) Yu—Reyes 20, Baker 11, Mallolos 10, Salido 8, Bernardi 6, Flores 5, Allad 2, Javier 1, Santos 0, Bernardi (Reyes), Bernardi, Jones 0, Ibrahim 0

HARBOUR (62)—Chan 15, Mbanner 12, Castro 8, Ibrahim 6, Amos 5, Ignacio 5, Ramos 4, Ramos 3, Ramos 2, Ignacio 1, Ignacio 1, Ignacio 0, Ignacio 0, Ignacio 0

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OSCAR de la Hoya (left) and Floyd Mayweather Jr. face off during the official weigh-in at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas. The American fighters meet today for the WBC super welterweight world championship belt. AP

All-time Mayweather test up

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—UNBEATEN Floyd Mayweather weighed in at the heaviest mark of his career here Friday on the eve of a showdown with Oscar de la Hoya, who tipped the scales right on the super welterweight limit.

The US fighter's ripped in size final countdown before Saturday's (Sunday morning in Manila) bout to slightly 1,000 less, since entering for De la Hoya, after Mayweather weighed in at 150 pounds (68.03 kg) and De la Hoya weighed in at 15 pounds (68.03 kg).

Most oddsmakers and prognosticators favor Mayweather in a decision, but the odds have steadily dropped in De La Hoya's favor during light week.

"Weight doesn't win fights. Popularity doesn't win fights. Skill wins fights. That's what I have," Mayweather said. "I don't care if he outweighs me by 25 pounds. I'm going to beat him when it's all said and done.

Mayweather (37-0, 24 knockouts) is once so boxing's best pound-for-pound fighters while popular Mexican-American hero De la Hoya (38-6, 30 knockouts) is set to join Mike Tyson as boxing's all-time pay-per-view revenue king with more than $1.00 million in earnings.

Mayweather, 30, moves up to the heavier weight class of his career and will surpass his previous high for a fight, the 147 pounds he weighed 18 months ago in a ninth-round stoppage of compatriot Sharmba Mitchell.

De la Hoya, 34, trimmed down his larger frame to defend his World Boxing Council crown to only the second fight in 3 1/2 years. A year ago, he stopped Nicaraguan Ricardo Mayorga in the ninth round at 152 pounds.

De la Hoya's top weight was 160 pounds in a 2004 win over Felix Sturm.

Mayweather has set the tone for pre-fight hype aimed beyond boxing's traditional core but fans with trash talking.

"I've done enough talking," Mayweather said. "Now it's time to fight."

Strategy will play a pivotal role in the fight, with De la Hoya needing to take advantage of superior size to offset the youth and speed advantages of Mayweather.

It's all going to come down to speed and punching power," De la Hoya said. Dee related story on page A27.) AFP

Tiger, Vijay move atop Wachovia

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA—Tiger Woods seized a share of the halfway lead in the $6.4-million Wachovia Championship on Friday alongside Vijay Singh and Steve Flesch.

Woods hit only five fairways, but managed not to make a bogey until his final hole so he carded a 4-under par 66 for 9-under 133.

Fiji's Singh, who like Woods played in benign morning conditions, posted a 71 while Flesch shot a 68 to complete the trio, who led Ted Purdy (69) and Jason Bohn (72) by one shot.

Kenny Perry (70) was a further shot back on 135.

Woods, who has never won here, signed for five birdies against the one bogey.

"I'm very pleased with my score," said Woods, who was making his first start since last month's Masters. "I missed a couple of short ones but also got away with a couple of bad drives."

Four-round leader Padraig Harrington recovered from a poor start to topple the outright lead with two bonus pars only to drop four shots in a nightmare finish.

Singh also made a sluggish start, dropping two shots on his outward half, but he finished strong, picking up three strokes in his last three holes. AFP

Nets set up series vs Cavs

EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY—Richard Jefferson made the go-ahead basket with 0.1 seconds left, stole a pass on the next possession, and the New Jersey Nets beat the Toronto Raptors, 98-97, to win the NBA first-round playoff series, 4-2, on Friday.

After underachieving for most of the season, the Nets now head to Cleveland for Game 1 of the Eastern Conference semifinals on Sunday.

Jason Kidd finished with 18 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds for the Nets, averaging a triple-double for the series.

Jefferson scored 24 points and Vince Carter added 21 despite shooting 6-of-19 from the field.

Chris Bosh had 22 points, nine assists and seven rebounds for the Atlantic Division champion Raptors, but Joe Calderon's pass to him was intercepted by Jefferson, sending the Raptors to their ninth straight road postseason loss.

After three dismal games in New Jersey this season, Bosh was terrific this time, scoring 12 points in the fourth quarter. He finished it a jumper with 47 seconds left, giving the Raptors a 97-96 lead.

But after a timeout, Jefferson drove in to the lane and rose over Bosh for his layup. The Raptors then tried to shoot Bosh coming in the basket, but Jefferson came away with Calderon's pass and put the Nets back into the conference semifinals.

Toronto got inspired efforts from bulged-up point guards T.J. Ford and Calderon, who combined for 32 points. But the best point guard on the floor, as usual, was Kidd, who averaged 14 points, 13.2 assists and 10 rebounds to become the first player to average a triple-double for a series since he did it against Boston in the 2002 Eastern Conference finals. AP

NEW JERSEY Nets' Richard Jefferson (left) puts up the game-winning shot as Toronto Raptors' Anthony Parker (right) and Morris Peterson (bottom right) fall to cover him.

'Racial bias a bum rap'

EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY—NBA commissioner David Stern considered Friday a timely opportunity to defend among league officials and the New York Times for printing it, saying racism "doesn't exist in the NBA."

"My major concern about it is that it's wrong," Stern said of the report.

"This is a front-page, and if it's a going to be laid out as it should be laid out to by hours of some people who are paid to spend to be scholars by politicians that purport to hold us up to a higher standard... a little bit more should have been done."

Stern seemed more annoyed with the Times, saying it "behaved very badly, very badly."

James Wallen, an assistant professor of business and public policy at the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School, and Joseph Price, a Cornell University graduate student in economics, found that white referees called fouls at a greater rate against black players than against white players.

The study, conducted over a 13-year span through 2004, showed only the referees' names and contained no information about which official made a call. AP

Kuznetsova expels Venus, enters semis

WARSAW, POLAND—SVETLANA Kuznetsova rallied to beat Venus Williams, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, Friday and reach the semifinals at the clay-court J&S Cup.

"It was so much fun to play; it was so much passion," Kuznetsova said.

Also, top-ranked Justine Henin of Belgium beat Klara Koukalova of Italy, 6-2, 6-1; fourth-seeded Jelena Jankovic of Serbia advanced after ninth-seeded Anna Chakvetadze of Russia retired with a right shoulder injury while trailing, 7-6 (7), 5-1; and Alona Bondarenko of Ukraine also won after Julia Vakulenko withdrew with a sprained right wrist while trailing, 6-2, 2-1.

Kuznetsova will next play Henin.

Williams, looking to avenge a quarterfinal loss to Kuznetsova at last year's edition of the tournament, stole two quick breaks from her Russian opponent to capture the first set.

But Kuznetsova found a rhythm in the second set, rowing the American on the baseline and nailing passing shots and lobs when Williams tried to attack the net.

Kuznetsova snatched a first break from Williams and four to break and take a 2-1 lead on her way to winning the set.

After trading early breaks in the third set, Williams broke opponent at 4-3.

But Kuznetsova broke back, held serve, and then hit a deep forehand to force an error from Williams to lead 5-4 and serve out the match.

"I'm very happy to go through today's match because I think Venus played very well," Kuznetsova said. AP

Castrale paces SemGroup

BROKEN ARROW, OKLAHOMA—Nicole Castrale fired a 4-under par 67 here Friday to climb a one-shot lead after the first round of the $1.4-million LPGA SemGroup Championship.

In her second full season on the LPGA tour since turning pro in 2005, Castrale has two top-10 finishes in 2007, including a fourth-place tie at the Ginn Open three weeks ago.

After making $400,000 in her rookie campaign last season as a professional, Castrale has already won $161,000 this season.

"I just figure if I keep doing what I'm doing, good things will happen," Castrale said.

Castrale has a one-shot lead over Brandie Burton, Angela Stanford and Sweden's Karin Gjedde, who carded 68s on a soft Cedar Ridge country club course.

Defending champion Ginnie Kirk, who shot a career-best 10-under-par 61 in the second round here last year, shot a 5-over 76 and was tied for 76th.

Lorena Ochoa of Mexico carded a 70 for a share of 12th place. AFP

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PBO Philippines president Jim Lafferty with Ramon Silva

Exec saves a man's life

Savior came in shorts and rubber shoes

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ON OCT. 24, 2006, RAMON SILVA OF LIPA, Batangas, followed his new Christ.

And he, he did not have shoulder-length hair, blue eyes or a rave-rich beard. Rather, the person he saw had dar hedd of a marvelous sonic rubber shoes, shorts and a marathon shirt and was furiously giving CPR to his T-shirt who had suffered a heart attack.

It was more than 200 months later before he realized that that person who had saved his father's life that chaotic day in the Nagoya airport in Japan was James M. Lafferty, president of Procter & Gamble Philippines.

The younger Silva recalls in the Japanese that he and his father, Romeo, were lining up at the Nagoya airport for a layover from a long 12-hour flight from Detroit, Michigan, where his 74-year-old father suddenly slumped on the ground.

To his panic, all that he could think say was "Sino, Dino, Gumilliso ka (Father, father, fight)." He would not even have to remain his father for fear of making his condition worse.

Lafferty on the other hand, who was traveling with his wife and two youngest children, was about 15 persons behind the Silvas when he heard the shout, and saw the older Silva

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Showcase for Eastern Visayas' SMEs

'Pasalubong' center opens for small producers

By Vicente Labor
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—UP UNTIL JANUARY last year, the products of micro and small entrepreneurs in Eastern Visayas did not get much exposure.

Those small entrepreneurs were limited to trade fairs to showcase and sell their products, which included food delicacies, fashion accessories and handicrafts.

Recognizing the need for them to have increased market exposure, the Bukasoft Producers Association of Eastern Visayas (BPAEV) decided to set up the Pasalubong Center at the terminal building of the Daniel Z. Romualdez Airport in Barangay San Jose, about 12 kilometers from Tacloban City proper.

The Pasalubong Center, which displays handicrafts, processed food, fashion accessories and souvenir T-shirts, allows locals and visitors to see and buy products made by the BMES members-farmers.

The Pasalubong Center started its operations in December 2005 but was formally opened in January 2006.

Since then, foreign tourists, businessmen and other visitors to the city have frequented the gift center where they can buy such can't-be-dela-mies as binagol, mamon, pastillas de leche, marsie cookies and banana or cube chips as well as canter bags, mats, wall decors and fashion accessories made of dried dung or pandan weave, coconut shells, or seashells.

Composed of small entrepreneurs who have been joining the Bukasoft Trade fair in Manila during City since the late 1980s, the BPAEV was organized in 2002 by the Department of Trade and Industry regional office headed by Regional Director Cynthia Warren and the DTI provincial offices.

Those small entrepreneurs have been ranging every year the Bukasoft Trade Fair at the SM Megamall. They have also been attending business management and product development, among other training courses, conducted by the DTI and other government agencies.

Through the years, they have developed into competent businessmen, the

PHOTOS (Inset) BY

livelihood activities at their respective places."

Putting up the Pasalubong Center has helped fulfill one of the members' long-growing cherished dreams.

"We decided to put up a Pasalubong Center because many of us do not have a common outlet for our products. At that time we only have the Bukasoft Trade Fair as a venue to showcase our products," Warren said.

Aurea says a grant from the German government helped the entrepreneurs realize their plan to establish a Pasalubong Center at the airport.

According to Aurea, income taken of the present Pasalubong Center averages P1,000-P1,500 a day, a day from P4,000 to average daily sales registered during the first six months of their operation last year.

But BPAEV members remain optimistic that businesses would pick up steam as the economy continues improving.

Aside from joining the Bukasoft Trade Fair, Aurea reveals that members of the association are now participating in regional trade fairs like the ones held in Cebu during the Sinulog Festival, in Bacolod during the Masskara Festival, and in Iloilo during the Dinagyang Festival.

Aurea says the BPAEV plans to put up another Pasalubong Center either in Tacloban City or Ormoc City, which has a busy seaport for Cebu-bound vessels, or in Catbalogan town, which is along the national highway and located midway between Tacloban and Ormoc.

Until then, people will have to go to the Tacloban airport to see what entrepreneurs from the Eastern Visayas have to offer.

BASES are popular items

TOGOG mats

DTI office here noted.

BPAEV executive director Lolito Aurea says there were only 40 members when the group was just up. By 2006, the membership rose to 62. And in recent years, the membership touched more than 100, but Aurea said that only about 60 percent are active.

He explains that financial difficulties forced some of their members to become inactive. "But they are still active in their

Exec saves a man's life

Front page 61

fall to the ground.

His instinct to help kicked in early. Watched by Gilbert's ride, Uy felt for a pulse, realizing that there was none, he ripped his shirt open and immediately gave CPR to try and restart his heart.

It had been a while since Uy had last gone CPR, which was why he was turning through the steps in his mind while compressing hard on Silva's heart to make sure he was doing it right.

Fortunately, he says, CPR was a skill one doesn't easily forget and he managed to step up to it made to appear on hospital scenes in television shows.

"We are talking about hard compressions to the chest and I was really all over the person," Uy says. "By the time I was done, I had to change my shirt because I was drenched in sweat."

"I also remember looking up twice to chest and ask where the medical personnel were. I looked up again and saw my wife tightly holding on to their young son, whom I later learned was the son of the man I was giving CPR to," Uy/Mary adds in an interview.

He recalls that during the whole ordeal, only a few people knocked down beside him to try and help. Thousands more who were at the busiest point of the Naypoy airport—in between counter and security—either just looked the other way or walked on by.

Lallery also had a choice.

He could either leave Silva to his fate or make the flight to Manila. He chose to stay and try to bring him back to life.

"If I had left, what kind of message would I give to my children who always hear me say that we should always try to do the right thing," Lallery says.

Naypoy airport medical personnel finally came after 45 minutes and put Silva on a stretcher, and only after Lallery successfully got Silva's heart beating again.

After quickly briefing the medical personnel of Silva's situation, Lallery and his family hurriedly picked up their bags, rushed through security and got back on the Northwest Airlines flight for Manila.

"Northwest Airlines was outstanding because they held the flight for us. We were the last to board the plane, and we took off as soon as we got in," Lallery says.

He says about 30 people on board the plane came up to him during the flight to ask him about what had happened. All he could say was that the guy was alive when he last saw him, but that he didn't know anything else.

It was his unassuming need to know that drove him to do what every is took to find out what had happened to the elderly person that he did not know from Adam.

He, however, admits that he was not feeling too optimistic because the only two other people he had given CPR to in a bind in Micronesia did not make it.

"I really just wanted to know if it was different this time," Lallery says.

While Lallery and his family were on their way to Manila, the Silvas, on the other hand, found themselves in a community hospital in Nagoya where nobody spoke any English.

Rosario Silva regained consciousness a few hours after he was admitted, but it took almost a day before he was ready to recuperate. It was four days before the Silvas were given the go-ahead to go back to Manila.

"When I learned at the hospital was that the good that you do for others comes back to you tenfold," Ronald says.

He related how online and airport personnel rushed them after they got off work just to see how they can help, and how a total stranger went to his room and gave him 2,000 yen because he realized that he did not have any money to buy food with.

On the day that he reunited his father out of the hospital, some of the staff members were in tears because they got to know the Silvas well, even if they communicated only through sign language.

"When we got on the plane back to Manila, I kept on talking to my father because I was afraid he would fall asleep and have another heart attack," Ronald says.

"When we finally landed in Manila, I shouted 'Thank God! I did not save if the others in the plane were staring at me, I was just happy to be home, with my father alive and well," he adds.

They immediately went home to Batangas and Ronald asked the airline for information on who had saved his father.

"I know that he gave me his calling card at the airport just before they left, but I lost it to my panic," Ronald says.

His thought he would never get to personally thank his father's savior, not knowing that Lallery was in another part of the Philippines looking for his father.

Fate finally stepped in and on Dec. 31, 2006, Lallery got a call from Northwest Airlines and he was told that the person he saved was Rosario Silva and that he was alive and well and looking to him.

"That was the greatest Christmas present ever," Lallery says. "to know that I was able to make a difference."

A few days after, Ronald got a similar call and finally knew who invented the life-father's life.

Finally, through the kindness of NWA personnel and Noah's went Atlanta staff, Lallery and Silva finally met for the first time at Lallery's office in Makati City just after New Year.

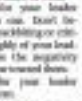
"I cannot put into words how we felt when they met again for the first time since the incident," Ronald says. "I really believe that the time stopped when they hugged each other tight with tears streaming down all of our faces."

They met again last month to celebrate Rosario Silva's 70th birthday.

"I feel as happy to be alive," the elder Silva says.

Lallery is, too.

Challenges of a 360° leader



LEADING UP TO THE 360° leader's greatest challenge.

We're accustomed to influence flowing from the top down, and, for that reason, leading up feels like running uphill. You know enough, leading up requires extra effort.

Why? Because influence upon those in authority above us calls for boldness, respect and sacrifice. In the long run, the extra effort will distinguish you from the rest of the pack. Jack Welch calls this "getting out of the pile."

The following suggestions are ways to succeed as you take on the mission of those at the top.

Lighten your leader's load

To lead up, increase your value by helping to lift your leader's load. Try to anticipate what your leader needs and wants. Given reality, you may even approach your leader and ask, "What can I do for you today?"

Always remember: When the boss succeeds, the organization succeeds. Ultimately, you can't succeed if your boss fails.

Senega Isad Silver leader knows this. It demonstrates your dedication to the vision, and displays gratitude for your position on the team.

In easing your leader's burden, you'll be noticed and valued; at the same time, you'll be playing a substantial role in helping the organization move forward.

Be sure to do your own job well before you concentrate on lifting your leader's load. If you drop your personal responsibilities, you'll drag your leader down rather than propping them up.

When you find a problem, provide a solution. If you only identify what to endure, you look no different than a complainer. Show initiative by repairing the problems you encounter.

Tell your leaders what they need to know, not what they want to hear. In the words of President Dwight Eisenhower: "A bold leader will be lonely." Have the courage to speak your mind and confront difficult issues.

On the second mile. Be willing to serve early, stay late, and do more than your share of work.

Stand up for your leader whenever you can. Don't become party to backbiting or criticism. Speak highly of your leaders and diffuse the negativity others may show toward them.

Stand in for your leader whenever you can.

In the words of Colin Powell: "When we are debating an issue, loyalty means giving me your honest opinion, whether you think I'll like it or not. Disagreement, in this setup, stimulates me. But once a decision has been made, the debate ends. From that point on, loyalty means executing the decision as if it were your own."

There will be instances when you do not see eye to eye with your leader's decision. Respecting their authority by supporting them, even when you disagree, will give them the confidence to trust you.

Principles 360° leaders practice

Leading your peers is an simple task. It's easy for an effective leader to lead followers, but leading seems can be difficult—especially for highly productive people who might resent feelings of jealousy or competition among their peers.

Effective 360° leaders give their colleagues reasons to respect and follow them. Because they lead seems successfully, they are able to assist the people beside them, profit the organization, and advance themselves.

Understand, practice and complete the leadership loop.

Leading peers is not a one-time event. It's an ongoing process. When leading seems, the temptation is to try to take the lead too quickly. Taking shortcuts or cheating the process will erode your respect from others rather than gaining influence with them.

Leadership loop

Caring—Take an interest in people.

People always move toward anyone who increases them and away from anyone who decreases them.

Learning—Get to know people.

Invest the time to understand the values that motivate your fellow leaders.

Appreciating—Respect people.

Find and encourage the strengths unique to each of your colleagues. Assume they have your best interest at heart, and be open to their ideas and concerns.

Contributing—Add value to people.

Few activities add to a leader's credibility like the dedication to add value to the people around them...especially when the load is in neither obligated to add value nor receiving direct benefit from doing it. Adding value to peers lets them know that you are on their side and are cheering for them to win.

Multiplying—Affirm people.

To affirm signifies to make firm. An affirmation is a statement of truth you make firm by repetition. Affirmations enable others to believe in their dreams. To people to reach their potential, their dreams must become more real than their doubts.

Leading—Influence people.

Understand, enlarge and empower those who are leading beside you.

Succeeding—Win with people.

When you succeed with people, you gain opportunities to influence even more people. The leadership loop completes a cycle and begins anew. At additional progressive points in life, you must again choose to take an increase in them, get to know them, etc.

For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, phone 813-2640-2720.

SMFI launches Donate-A-Book

SM FOUNDATION INC. LAUNCHES ITS SIXTH Donate-A-Book program for the year in SM City Sta. Lucia to encourage everyone to donate books and cash recently. Several publishing companies such as the Philippine Bible Society, MS Pantin Corp., Alcuaz Books Inc., Bookmark Inc., Alberto Florar Inc., JFW Corp. and the Ateneo de Manila University of the Philippines, bookstores and private individuals have pledged to support this year's Donate-A-Book Project.

The program was energized to address the problem of book shortage in public schools and to cultivate interest in reading in beneficiary communities. Books and other reading materials that will be gathered will be distributed to public schools and libraries. Cash donations, on the other hand, will help improve the facilities and educational materials of SMFI's adopted schools.

The decade-old campaign has collected 2.6 million books. Over 50,000 public elementary and high schools, provincial and barangay libraries as well as daycare centers have benefited from the program.

'12 years of sheer joy. Prestige Cars BMW.
Celebrate with the Prestige Beach Holiday Promo
Prestige Cars BMW commemorates years of dedication to customer satisfaction. It is offering a 0.12 APR on selected units at Prestige BMW exhibition from April 28 to May 31, 2007, plus a BMW owner's manual at the cost of 12 editions of whatever will enjoy at no extra charge. Two lucky drawing periods also mean chances to win Mandarin Oriental 12 Cold Suites All Expenses Prestige Cars BMW's everything BMW.
Prestige Cars BMW
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Isn't it refreshing to know that there's still a place where neighbors can be neighbors? Where warmth is as natural as the fresh air that sweeps through each home? At Rosewood Pointe, the unique Asian-inspired architecture naturally fosters Asian values, letting relationships blossom. Enjoy quiet and unhurried Sunday lunches at the Clubhouse or lazy afternoons with the kids at the Oriental-inspired Central Park or Koi Pond. Close enough to the exciting offerings of the Bonifacio Global City, but also far enough from the hustle and bustle and the noise of the big city, it's a place for values to flourish and relationships to grow. Because you know what's truly important to you, we're sure you'll make the right decision and call Rosewood Pointe your new home.
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Because you know.

Off the top of your head... How many call center agents are you going to *lose* this year?

As a call center operator, you already know one of this year's most challenging problems will be HR-related, specifically agent retention and attrition. It's getting harder to keep your most valuable agents with your company. PLDT can help you do that.

The PLDT WAHO Guarantee: We guarantee clear and stable Voice Quality for your call center's connections to all your work-at-home agents; those connections are totally secured. We ensure that WAHO passes stringent test parameters that meet international call center standards.

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Sunday Biz

Managing a company on toes

Lisa Macuja learns ropes of running a venture via long distance

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

THE POPULAR NOTION IS THERE IS NO money in art.

History has shown this with the likes of Van Gogh dying poor and miserable, never seeing the fruits of his priceless creations.

But there are a few smart ones who have lived to enjoy the fruits of their work, such as Picasso—whose latter years' work soared more like jokey than avid attempts at avoiding works of art—yet still managed to command handsome selling prices.

Lisa Macuja Elizalde, the country's most popular ballerina, wants to be a bit of Picasso.

She aims to do this even as she continues to battle criticisms leveled against her for trying to give her dancers more than pauper's pay and accepting "jobs" that could tarnish a would-be prima ballerina's image.

To equip herself with this know-how, Lisa enrolled in a distance learning program from a school in the United States.

In a few months, the 48 something ballerina will graduate, with honors, from the University of Phoenix with a degree in Business Management.

Her reason for studying is simple enough. Along with the principle that you "lead, guide and nurture by example," Lisa, then a new mom to first baby Misha and a surrogate mom to her husband's daughter, Isabe, after one recovering college, felt she did not have the moral authority to require her children to study as she herself did not finish college.

Isabe took up practically all of her time. She never had the chance to get a degree.

Unmoved by many an/her best opinion, on as first, she took up a two-year Associate in Arts, General Studies from UOP like Isabel did in four years.

She found herself missing school, so she used her free nights on getting a management degree earning her company now exhibiting growing pains and she had to step out a moment for expansion.

"Helping her a lot in business are her classes in psychology and human resource management.

She says learning from her human resources class for example "helped me motivate dancers. There are dancers I could immediately praise and apply."

Lisa describes Ballet Manila as a dance company that is still a "mom and pop" operation but "is getting bigger."

At present, the president of Ballet Manila is her dad, Cesar, while the treasurer is her mom, Susan. But with exposure to management systems and business cases daily, Lisa is working to create systems within the company.

And she says that despite the criticisms thrown her way about Ballet Manila being too much of a business, she insists "I am not commercial."

She knows she can say it so much more if she offers more popular courses like Pilates. Yoga, too knows do but she says she remains focused on ballet.

What she acknowledges is that a dance company needs density to survive and must money means a bigger establishment

MANGINO B3 ›

AFTERNOONS are spent teaching, rehearsing and dancing.

Pilipinas Shell complies with BioFuels Law

Shell Diesoline Ultra with one percent bio-diesel now available at Shell stations

Manila, Philippines (06 May 2007) - Shell, the world's largest distributor of transport biofuels, supports the biofuels act of 2006 through its compliance with the minimum one percent biodiesel mandate in its diesel engine fuels using coconut methyl ester (CME).

With over 30 years of experience with alternative fuels in countries such as USA, Brazil, Sweden, and Thailand, Shell believes that the use of such fuels is part of its commitment to sustainable development in the Philippines and around the world. Shell is working towards securing sustainable biofuel components that meet technical, environmental and economic criteria including internationally recognized human and worker rights and the preservation of protected areas or valuable ecosystems.

"With over 30 years of marketing and distribution experience with biofuels through other Shell operating companies in the world, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation believes that the use of such fuels is not only in compliance with the law, but also as part of its commitment to Sustainable Development," Pilipinas Shell Country Chairman Edgar Chua said. "We would like to congratulate the Philippine Government for this milestone in the biofuels industry," he further added.

Pilipinas Shell tapped on this global experience & leadership, allowing it to be the first major oil company in the Philippines to launch its rebated Shell gasoline, Shell Super Unleaded E10, in May 2006. Today, Pilipinas Shell continues to leverage on their experience to support the government's mandate of having a minimum one percent biodiesel blend in all its diesel engine fuels sold in the country. It is because of its experience, knowledge, technical innovation and leadership to facilitate that Shell's biofuels customers around the world have come to consistently trust Shell.

Shell Diesoline Ultra with biodiesel is now available for motorists at Shell fuelstops nationwide.

Bringing the native flavor closer to the metro

By Mike Morales

THERE ARE PERHAPS 30 WAYS TO prepare longganisa, with each province boasting it has the best.

City dwellers, however, have a slim chance of tasting these longganisa varieties because the provinces are so far away.

Entrepreneur John Sison of Sassi Corp., thus, thought of bringing these and other specialties—such as longganisa from Lucban and Vigan and bangus mindfillet from Dagupan—closer to the city through the supermarkets.

"My goal is to be able to make hard-to-find specialty products from different provinces available here in the city," Sison says.

He says that because these longganisa eateries are hard to find, the mainstay practice is to ask someone going to Cebu, Davao or other places to bring home these products.

SomeCorp., created by Sison in 1991, has to date brought in the metro some five varieties of longganisa.

Sison says he has been hopping from one province to another, looking for authentic longganisa to inject and sell here in the city.

He narrates excitement of the and how variety of his products, saying he personally checks and tastes the longganisa before making any purchase.

"I source the products myself and use color guidelines for sourcing products in the taste and quality of the product," Sison says. "I also conduct focus group discussions with friends and my existing clients and I do interviews to find out if there is a market for such products."

The business, Sison relates, has a "Baby" beginning.

MUNCHIES Six varieties of longganisa in Manila

BONELESS bangus from Sagay can earn a premium.

Sison says he started off selling packs of boneless dalag na bangus, which he buys all the way from Dagupan. The Pangasinan town is famous for its bangus products, including its version of dalag na bangus.

He recalls going from place to place, offering its supply customers and cafeterias with his dalag.

"I walked into different restaurants, club houses and villages to solicit my initial clientele. I still deliver to this day," Sison says.

He adds that many of his clients include Valle Verde Country Club, Manor and Cova restaurants in Greenbelt, the Senate and House of Representatives' cafeteria, Floating Island restaurant in Makati Medical Center, and the Department of Tourism and the GSIS canteens.

But his big break came in August 2000, while he was waiting for his products to be received at the receiving area of Rustan's Supermarket in Harrison Plaza.

It was then when he accidentally bumped into Rustan presidente Silvestre Bautista III.

"He (Tantoco) was inspecting the branch when I met him," Sison says. "He asked me what was I supplying Rustan's."

Upon learning that Sison was supplying packs of boneless bangus, Tantoco asked Sison to also supply Binangonan.

Sison was elated considering that his product had once been rejected by Shopwise.

"It was a blessing for me since Shopwise eventually took over Rustan's in 2000," Sison says.

Shopwise remains Sassi Corp.'s biggest client, and Sison now supplies the supermarket chain not just with bangus but also its average at least 4,000 cheese longganisa packs a month.

He is just about to start looking for more products to supply the city.

"I will also soon introduce the Bangus Longjang shanghai which will also come from Dagupan," Sison says. "It will retail at around P100 a pack or it will cost the affordable for everyday food."

"I also still in the process of bringing in Bagnet from Ilocos (Region) and Longganisa from Tuguegarao, Tabuenta-an and La Union which I already tested," he adds.

Pharma firms: Go back to basics to beat rising medical costs

MULTINATIONAL AND LOCAL PHARmaceutical companies, particularly members of the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) are urging the public to get back to basics and observe proper diet and exercise to beat rising costs of hospitalization and medication.

According to PHAP, "Most chronic diseases are largely preventable diseases, and what better ways to prevent diseases than through a well-balanced diet and proper nutrition coupled with regular exercise. There are also a lot of choices for health maintenance such as vitamins, supplements, vaccinations and preventive medicines or treatments. Prevention is still the most cost-effective, affordable and wise approach to avoid medical expenses."

"Changes in diets and lifestyles...the substitute lifestyle and increased consumption of alcohol and foods with high fat content, have caused significant changes in people's health and nutrition. Consequently, this also consistently increased incidence of diseases such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases and hypertension especially among poor people in developing countries," cites PHAP.

In fact, these diseases have become significant causes of disability and premature death in both developing and newly developed countries, placing additional burdens on already overtaxed national health budgets.

Based on projections, by 2020, chronic diseases will account for almost 75% of all deaths worldwide and 71% of deaths will be due to heart disease, 75% due to stroke and 70% of deaths due to diabetes will occur in developing countries. Heart diseases are already a major cause of death among Filipinos.

According to a report of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), "Evidence is mounting that diet as a major modifiable determinant of chronic disease and alterations in diet have strong effects, both positive and negative, on health throughout life. Dietary adjustments may not only influence present health, but may determine whether or not an individual will develop such diseases as cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes much later in life."

However, adds the report, "These concepts have not led to a change in policies or in practice. In many developing countries, food policies remain focused only on malnutrition and are not addressing the problem of chronic diseases. The need for action to strengthen current and proven interventions to counter the spread of the chronic disease epidemic is now widely recognized by many countries, but the developing countries are lagging behind in implementing such measures."

PHAP further says, "However, prevention should be an important part of any integrated healthcare program. Access to cheap but nutritious food is just as important, if not more important, than access to cheap but safe medicines. Investment in prevention is still better than a pound of cure."

According to WHO and FAO, there are renewed efforts to curb the rise in chronic diseases and it has become a high priority among international and trilateral agencies as well as the private sector and nongovernmental organizations or NGOs. These organizations have identified the need to prevent and control the increasing public health problems of chronic diseases by promoting appropriate diets and healthy lifestyles.

PHAP as an umbrella organization of multinational pharmaceutical companies in the country, has joined these worldwide efforts to combat the spread of chronic diseases through early detection and prevention. Its member companies traditionally also have their programs and campaigns.

"The statistics are really alarming. Thus, government and the private sector should really unite their efforts and resources to address the problem. A good start is to ensure proper nutrition among the Filipino children. Despite efforts of the health department to ensure that children covered by Philippine Charity Sweepstakes are fortified with vitamins and nutrients, malnutrition particularly among school-age children is still prevalent," cites PHAP.

Indeed, WHO cites that 10 percent of the 10.9 million deaths annually among children aged below five years in developing countries are associated with malnutrition. Iodine deficiency is named as the greatest single preventable cause of brain damage and mental retardation worldwide and is estimated to affect more than 700 million people, most of whom in less developed countries.

"Most of these deficiencies can be prevented through proper nutrition or adequate vitamin supplements. Malnutrition causes death, disability, mental and physical retardation. The public health implication of diet and nutrition-related diseases is indeed getting more serious," adds the PHAP.

In the joint report of WHO and FAO, it is recommended that preventive strategies should address both dietary risks for chronic diseases and other risks such as tobacco use and these should be comprehensive covering maternal and child health, and be applied in school and workplace environments.

Furthermore, it cited, governments need to work together with the private sector, healthcare bodies, consumer groups, academe, research community and other NGOs to ensure sustained progress of its endeavors and strategies.

Managing a company on toes

From page B4-1

HUSBAND Fred would occasionally share his insights.

LEGGINGS on human mannequins help her encourage her dancers.

She also has one other concern.

"When I was just Lisa Macuja, all my letter (requests) for sponsorship got affirmative replies. When I became Elizalde, the replies would be 'thank you but we have no budget at this time,'" she says. "This is not a personal whine that I hand with Fred. We would not be able to exist without Fred's (companies') subsidy," she says but adds that she needs support from others, too.

Elizalde's firms such as MNC provide some of the allowances, perks for those who watch the ballets such as free rides to Eton City.

The 800 studios are in Elizalde's huge residences in Pasay City.

Ed has about 60 scholars whose tuition provides training and allowance.

Each scholar costs about P15,000 a year, but now Lisa relies on some friends and a handful of corporate sponsors, who support those scholars, many of whom come from lower income families.

When she started, there was a dearth of male dancers as she focused on recruiting and training males. Today she says it is becoming more difficult to maintain females because many of them get distracted.

Female dancers usually come from middle-to upper income families. But when they reach a certain age, other interests attract them and they quit, leaving a dearth of ballerinas.

Lisa adds that over the years, there has been a decline in the student population of her school partly because of the increasing costs of the fees and the remaining interests of the students.

"But it does not yet alarm me," she briefly dismisses says.

Recently, she held Storytellers on Tour for her sponsors and prospective dancers, which generated interest and commitments for her company.

Lisa Macuja-Elizalde's dance has yet to reach its finale. She just hopes that the last act will not be the final one—that ballet in the country will be there for good. And like the lioness cat, only be done with the blessed dancers and support from the audience and the sponsors.

Camarines Sur: New kid in eco-tourism block

CWC chosen as 2008 International Water Ski Federation Cable Wakeboard World Championships venue

CAMARINES SUR, LOCATED IN the southeastern part of the country, has emerged as a prime sports and eco-tourism destination.

Figures from the Camarines Sur Tourism Office show tourist arrivals in the province went up by one-fold from 19,928 in January 2006 to 39,983 by December of the same year.

Tourist arrivals also doubled in 2006 from the previous year, from 144,352 to 288,888. Foreign tourists and businessmen account for approximately 10 percent of the increase.

Because of the influx of tourists, investors are picking up in many of the hotels and pension houses in Naga City as well as resorts in other towns.

A 5-star hotel has been built in Naga while existing ones are expanding. Room rates at hotels in the city range from P1,800 to P2000 a day for four persons and a room at less than P1,000 a day that could accommodate two to four persons in pension houses.

Outside Naga, among the new favorites is the Mansion Suites at Pili inside the sprawling provincial capitol complex, which was officially the Governor's Mansion before it was converted into a hotel with modern amenities. The theme is a mix of continental, traditional Filipino and Bicolano.

Room rates are reasonable—considering the modern amenities including free Wi-Fi access, as well as excellent service, spacious and comfortable accommodations...ranging from P1,200 for the De Luxe Double rooms to P4,000 for the Presidential Suites.

From the Mansion Suites it a brief two-minute shuttle to the Cimfree Watersports Complex (CWC), the premier attraction of the province, and one of the main reasons behind the tourism boom.

It has a 4-lot cable ski park with 2 units for wakeboarding and skiing, a large swimming pool, cabanas, a clubhouse and bar, spa service, internet Wi-Fi service, and other recreation facilities. Night stadium lights have been installed around the lake for night riding.

An added attraction is that it has the majestic Mt. Isarog as its backdrop. The cable ski park is now the most modern in the world, with a six-point cable system.

Conveniently located on one side of the lake, there is a variety of nearby built accommodations with modern amenities such as air-conditioning and toilet and bath—cabanas at P1,200 per day for two, with a choice of a queen-size or two single beds, and, one-room trailer houses at P1,000 per day for two, or two-room trailer houses at P1,500 per day for four.

For honeymooners, the Villa del Rey located near the Ciudad Real Isaac inside the provincial capitol complex, has 52 secluded honeymoon villas with complete amenities at P3,000 per day. Each unit has a king-size bed and a Jacuzzi.

Last July Week, aside from the session riders, there were so many guests who wanted to get close and wakeboarding Chief Steve more was busy hooking to the cable to try out the cable ski park.

Many were all praises for the CWC, and their comments are now immortalized below their photos in action that now adorn one wall at CWC.

Among them are: Donald Busfield, UK: "It has the best conditions and best cable set-up in the world!! I like the perfect length of the cable and its six towers and the obstacles...it's a lot of fun to ride it!!" and Daniel Bauer, Austria: "It's mind blowing to know that there is a somewhere out there as perfect as every thing here. This place is AMAZING!!"

The CWC has been chosen as the venue of the 2008 International Water Ski Federation (IWSF) Cable Wakeboard World Championships, which is considered as the world cup of wakeboarding.

Another attraction is the 9-hole golf course, located at Camaya coast at Sta. Lucia Realty, less than an hour's drive from Pili.

It is stocked with four hundred heads of various breeds, such as Blackbuck Antelope, Fallow Deer, Cribal Deer, Red Deer and Elk. It was started late in 1998 with only 60 heads of deer from Australia.

Those who want to go inland hopping can take a one-and-a-half hour drive from Pili to the port of San Jose, then another hour-and-a-half boat ride to Catanduanes. This is a 32-island-in-one tropical style resort owned by the Boa family into a bed and breakfast lodge (room rates range from P700 to P1,500).

The hotel has a rustic ambiance, and if staying there is like staying in a relative's home because the staff treats you like family. From the hotel it a 20-minute joyride to Gota beach, where one can hire a pump-boat for P1,500 per day to go island-hopping.

Virac Airport in the Catanduanes Peninsula have private white sand beaches and coves, perfect for swimming and snorkeling. Snorkeling gear can be rented in Naga City before going in San Jose at P600 a day per set (lunch and dinner not included).

Camarines Sur is optimistic that even more local and foreign tourists will come to the province for that much-needed break.

REVIEW School founded in 1948

Iloilo maritime school is now a university

FILIPINO SEAFARERS NOW have tough competition for jobs abroad. More and more they are competing with other nationals. For prospective employers they not only do they qualify for the job, they also are the best in their field.

This confidence in being a cut above the rest is at the core of the reservations at Iloilo Science Foundation Maritime University (ISUMU), the Philippines and Southeast Asia's first maritime university. It is also a mission that must motivate Dr. Mary Lou Arriola, president of her father's former maritime mentor Juan Bautista Lacson, who founded the university.

Lacson was a US Coast Guard lieutenant commander during World War II. In 1951, he built a review school for marine officers that would serve as prototype for the Iloilo Maritime Academy, a larger institution that he inaugurated in 1941 and which established Lacson as the pioneer in maritime education in the Visayas and Mindanao.

The school was converted into a foundation in 1980 and this year, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) upgraded it as university.

The university is also the only maritime education institution that maintains a maritime high school.

It is a major supplier technical and professional manpower abroad. Dr. John B. Lacson Maritime University has designed a set of curricula according to the standards set by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Its quality education and training through instruction, research and extension have always been the university's major preoccupation. Its curricula contains the competencies that IMO requires for personnel in support and operational levels up to management level.

John B. Lacson has also introduced a Center for Review and Competency Assessment that evaluates the proficiency of the students in the skills they gain during the shipboard phases. It is the only one in the Philippines that has an environmental maritime research library and laboratory.

Its constantly improving the standards of maritime education in the country, the university has received several accolades, most of which are groundbreaking. It is the first maritime education institution to have been accredited by the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA) in 1990 and granted a five years later the Autonomous Status by CHED. Its Quality Management System earned plaudit from Mitsubishi, which gave it the Philippine Quality Award Recognition for Commitment to Quality Management. Last year, the only maritime school to have been awarded such. Internationally, it was awarded the Dr. Nando Stefan Certification, the first in the Philippines and third in the world to receive the distinction.

Strong linkages with local and international maritime companies and maritime education institutions also contribute to the long list of achievements of the institution. The faculty profile is among the best in the country as 38LPMU is the only school in the country to be a Phi Delta Kappa Chapter member. Thus, the competency of its graduates is highly endorsed by manning and shipping companies.

To date, graduates from the university account for 1/4 percent of the country's contribution to the global maritime workforce.

Filipino seafarers have been at the forefront of the diaspora with fantasy landing this up with exclusive those that are mariners have been sailing the world's seas as far back as the galleon trade in the 16th century.

John B. Lacson Foundation Maritime University has campuses in Iloilo City (Molo and in Bacolod) and Bacolod City.

Asians move to new towns, far from the madding crowds

FOR A GLIMPSE OF HOW MILLIONS OF middle-class Asians would live in the future, take a look at Eastwood City, a self-contained office and apartment complex on the outskirts of Manila.

Its 9,000 inhabitants live in 40-story blocks, measure their commute in minutes, not hours, and never have to worry about power cuts or water stoppages. And at $175,000 for a 100-sq.m. home, they pay 1/3 percent less than they would in central Manila.

The shops are open until midnight and restaurants operate 24 hours, catering to shift workers in the Eastwood offices of international firms such as Dell and IBM.

The 14-hectare project is 15 minutes from downtown Manila, is one of dozens of new towns that developers are building across Asia to lure an emerging middle class out of the region's overcrowded cities.

With homes, offices, schools and shops within walking distance of each other, these towns are attracting young couples and nuclear families keen to escape the traffic jams, crowded classrooms, and creaking infrastructure of the big cities.

"What buyers want is easy access, schools, medical facilities," said Ang Pho Cuy, an executive director at Megaworld Land, one of the developers cashing in on this trend. "Whether it's Indians in Bangalore or the Chinese in Chengdu, they want the same things."

Keppel Land, Southeast Asia's third-largest property firm, has about 40 percent of its overseas investments in what it calls "townships" or "gated communities" such as Saigon Sports City, a 55-ha estate in Vietnam where a third of the land is set aside for sports facilities such as stadiums and tennis courts.

"Gated communities create a sense of exclusivity of being a class above the rest," Ang said, adding that Keppel Land's townships attract a range of middle-income buyers including young professionals and retirees.

It's not just aspirations driving the demand. Thanks to the outsourcing boom in India and the Philippines, these townships are proliferating in cheap, out-of-town locations.

Housing projects by top Philippine property firms such as Ayala Land and Megaworld Corp. are custom-built for residents who work in round-the-clock call centers.

Megaworld's Eastwood City has its own bank, 24 groceries so that workers early in Global Access's 24 by Manila's outsourcing frequent power outages.

The developer is spending $1.3 billion in the next decade to put up towns clustered around call centers.

Its largest such project, the 50-ha McKinley Hill estate, will have homes to suit the varying incomes of those who will live and work there, ranging from studios in three-story villas.

Just 20 km east of Malaysia's capital Kuala Lumpur, Gateway City has begun work on its 30-ha South Quay residential estate, which will include a brewery campus, a hospital and an office complex.

The firm hopes that students, medical staff and even foreign retirees will buy into the project, which it built around an artificial lake to attract its evening land.

For developers, cashing in on the dramatic investment returns of individual city-center apartment blocks, surrounding a premium because of all the extra amenities provided.

In India, developers are targeting international retirees at as much as 30-40 percent and dozens of firms are queuing up to launch public share sales to fund new projects. These include a $2-billion offering from DLF Ltd., a major builder in Gurgaon, a new town of almost 200,000 people on New Delhi's outskirts.

Gurgaon, with its bright white tower blocks, is thriving as one of India's main technology industry outsourcing hubs. Tax fund investments report that the city is generating an fare-evaded economic activity to complain about problems they thought they had left behind...blackouts and water shortages.

It's not the only township with problems. Perhaps the most famous failure was Bangkok Land's Mueang Thong Thani scheme, originally advertised as "the Beverly Hills of the Future," near the Thai capital's old international airport.

The $2-billion project stranded rapid sales in the early 1990s but remained a ghost town, as many buyers were speculators eager up to sympathy bubble while the market was booming.

The workers and other civil servants who were expected to live in the town of 30-story condominium blocks stayed away because the town was too far away from their workplaces.

By the time the Asian economic crisis hit in 1997, some 12,000 units were left unsold, and an attempt to persuade the government to move offices to the new town failed.

Architect Benjamin Wood, who turned a cluster of shabby houses in Shanghai into the trendy Xintiandi bar and restaurant district, said new towns only succeed if they get the right balance of homes, work and leisure.

"You need to mix it up. Just millions dollar homes next to middle-income homes, and shop houses and offices," Wood said. "An individual needs a lot of choice." Reuters

Ingredients to success in the food industry

IT TAKES MORE THAN KNOWING how to whip up gastronomic delights in the kitchen to become a successful chef-entrepreneur.

A successful chef-entrepreneur is someone who is aware of the latest trends in the food industry and who is passionate to satisfy customers. Being a well-rounded chef-entrepreneur is one of the characteristics of a graduate from the Center for Culinary Arts, Manila (CCA, Manila). The school is the country's pioneer in formal culinary education having had more than a decade of producing "socially responsible" food industry practitioners.

Its students and graduates have reaped awards in culinary competitions while those who work abroad have been noted to meet and even exceed international placement standards. One of them is 21-year-old CCA, Manila graduate Chef Nikki Nicolas.

Chef Nikki is one of the owners and managers of the kitchen of Izumo Sato, a Japanese restaurant in Shangri-La mall and Mandaluyong.

"Since my name is a good omen, it was natural for me to be a cook. But I've never had a burning love to cook enough to make me a successful restaurateur. So I initially enrolled at CCA, Manila," Chef Nikki recalled.

Chef Nikki said that CCA, Manila has helped her hone her innate talent in cooking and opened her eyes to the business aspect of it. In the past, "the school laid the foundations for me to have a strong and excellent culinary background."

After graduation, entrepreneurship beckoned. Chef Nikki went on her first business venture in the restaurant industry by putting up Izumo Sato together with her brother and some close friends in 2005.

"My friend, a chef who has an extensive experience in Japanese cooking, I also learned a lot from him especially how to prepare Japanese cuisine because it is very exacting and very challenging to make," said Chef Nikki. "It takes a lot of skill to perfect the taste."

Having learned the ropes, Chef Nikki is responsible for giving Izumo Sato's menu a "twist"—introducing to its diners' taste another level of Japanese cooking. Chef Nikki reveals that the restaurant's menu does not change up with every issue and of course, getting them accordingly.

In a few months time, another Izumo Sato branch will open at the food court of Trinoma Mall.

One of the key factors why Chef Nikki became a successful chef-entrepreneur is her flexibility. "Working with what you have, what you can afford, what will suit your restaurant are just some the things that one should be able to do in order to succeed in the business."

As an advice to youngsters who are studying or planning on whether to attend a culinary school or not, that is Chef Nikki's advice. "If you have the interest and passion for cooking, enroll at CCA, Manila because you can learn a lot not only from your professors but also from your fellow students while you're still. Eventually, you can open a restaurant with your fellow classmates...that's one of my goals in the coming years."

For inquiries on the diploma or short courses, call 426-4025, or 426-4808 local 41, CCA, Manila campus is located at 2/F Encarnacion Avenue, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Application for June classes is ongoing.

Sunday BIZ

EDNA Concepto, owner of Nora's Footwear

Liliw footwear clan keeps industry walking

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SEAOIL STATIONS: OVER 100 STATIONS NATIONWIDE

By Madonna Virola
Inquirer Southern Luzon

TAGAYTAY CITY—FOOTWEAR-making runs in the family of Edna Concepto, owner of Nora's Footwear in Liliw, Laguna.

Her father, his nine siblings, their parents and around 35 cousins have their own footwear stores in Liliw.

But instead of competing with each other, they help each other grow their businesses, she says.

Concepto's ears were recently invited to this city by Ephel Olivarez, daughter of the owner of Ole Olivarez Convention Center, to represent Liliw footwear for its footwear products.

These include the "bakya" (wooden sandal), wedge shoes with strap, wedge shoes with rice beads, pig shoes with rice beads flat, wedge shoes strap, wedge shoes pig, strap-in strap (Bat Lead Chrappers inspired) sandals.

Concepto's clients include stores in Greenhills, St. Francis Square (at the back of Megamall), Glorietta in Makati and markets in Ilaw Bonifacio and Malating.

"There are also tradelinds who buy in bulk then sell to other stores," says Concepto.

Own boss

Concepto could have chosen to be employed. She holds a degree in banking and finance, and has worked with the Liliw Rural Bank and is a top sales agent at Philam Life Insurance.

But she promised herself that she would no longer be an employee.

"I don't like to have a boss. I want responsible and to express my talents," says Concepto, adding that she loves to draw and design.

Like most entrepreneurs, Concepto started small in 1985 with three dozens slippers and a capital of P5,000.

She then raised the capital to P100,000.

"It took me a big amount of courage, traveling to different places like Palawan, Bohol and Hong Kong for exposure and networking," she says.

Her unique designs attract people to buy, giving her the biggest sale of P100,000 in one day last year.

Concepto usually sells wholesale and when there are retailers, she gives the same price as for wholesale.

"I don't like haggling with customers," she says. "I work hard, no wasting of time and I've overcome shyness."

Recently she was busy preparing for the "Tatalon Festival," an attraction in Liliw town.

Concepto appreciates being a member of the Liliw footwear association, which has more than 100 members because of its support system.

"We're about 70-80 years strong the oldest going in the association/hall," she says.

Lessons

Concepto says her business suffered a setback when economic turnaround up to P500,000 and ten sorry-stuffs.

She was forced then to work again—still in Philam.

But while she was doing good as Philam, her two children did not like her out-of-town trips, so she decided to go back to her footwear business.

She used her earnings from Philam, where she worked for five years, to retire her business.

Now, Concepto has about 30 part-time workers who, she says, can earn as much as P3,000 a week each if they work hard.

She makes sure her workers are paid on time.

Some of her workers who learned the business from working with her have also put up their own stores.

Concepto does not mind, as it has become part of Liliw's tradition.

Aside from her shoe factory and store, she put up a restaurant of foods wrapped in banana leaves.

"Native products are the 'in thing' since I started [in the business]. Both local and foreign buyers patronize them," she says.

With both footwear and food stores, Concepto implements the lesson she learned: Give no credit.

"We have free delivery. After one month and the products are unsold, we replace them because they can be sold in other places," she says.

She's set here on exporting because she finds the Philippines a good-enough market.

"I hope this lasts but life and my children will continue it. I'm dreaming for more outlets in different places," she says.

VENNYZ Footwear's products

Krispy Kreme to open drive-thru outlet

KRISPY KREME DOUGHNUT CORPORATION, inside its first drive-thru outlet in Asia and its first free-standing store in the Philippines at the Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan. Krispy Kreme Greenhills is the third outlet in the Philippines. It is expected to open on the last week of June. Present during the groundbreaking rites were Carolyn Sabol, the head American Doughnut Company Inc. managing director, Shamin Poonwalla, board member; Rely Reyes, executive director of White Grass Charity; and Nini Poonwalla, chair.

Sunday LIFESTYLE
Alex Chelo Bunal-Formoso

DROOL-WORTHY 1956 Jaguar XKE owned by Michael Aguilar is best Late Golden Era class

Expensive toys for big boys

By Alex T. Vergara

KEEPING A CONVENTIONAL car from looking old and weakness is a still endless. But keeping a classic car as authentic as the day it rolled out of the factory 50 years ago is harder and costlier.

Vintage cars have become a hobby for rare old-car enthusiasts or (chunks "hunting" Cojuangco, Joel Jimenez, Alex Claudio, Jay Aldington, Michael Aguilar and Manny Dimalanta). And these big boys didn't just stay in the closet to show off their expensive toys by joining the Concours d'Elegance at the poolside of the Sofitel Philippine Plaza.

With the Manila Bay and its famed sunset as backdrop, the event was an unlikely mix of sex, sex and gleaming cars—from Jaguars to Ferraris, Mercedes Benzes to Porsches, Corvettes to Mustangs—that culminated in a blank-tie dinner among proud hobbyists and their collaborators.

In keeping with tradition, the club's sexy, wheelchair male members were asked to come either in tuxedos or muscle jackets with matching bow ties. Some played the role of dandy to the hilt by sporting either bolero or cowboy caps.

Organized by the Manila Sport Car Club in collaboration with its 40th year as an organization, the event provided close to 30 enthusiasts a venue to show off their prized possessions. Their efforts didn't go unnoticed, as most of

CONTINUED (2)

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CHFS Choice: 1937 Mercedes Benz 380SL aka "Gullwing," owned by Ramon Torres

CLASSIC box in class: 1957 Chevrolet pickup owned by Alfred Perez

BARELY Golden Era box: in class 1964 Austin Cooper owned by Ted Granda

BEST of Show: 1931 Packard owned by Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.

With the Manila Bay sunset as backdrop, the Concours d'Elegance is an unlikely mix of sun, sea and gleaming cars—from Jaguars to Ferraris, Mercedes Benzes to Porsches, Corvettes to Mustangs

Expensive toys for big boys

POST-WAR: best in class and Fukuhara awardee: 1951 Jaguar XK120 owned by Jorge Lee

MODERN class 2nd place: 1969 Mercedes Benz 280SE owned by Joel Jimenez

From page C1

Owners were home with special honors in various categories.

An alluring Cojuangco received top honors when his 1931 Packy Arrow bested all other vehicles to win the Pre-War Class and Best in Show.

"It was a unanimous decision," said Hong Kong-based Ian Fraizer, one of the judges. "Everything about that car is perfect. It managed to look like new even in the 21st century."

Apart from being avid collectors themselves, judges like Fraizer and Graham Allen have done extensive research on vintage cars.

According to them, visible signs of rust and haphazard paint jobs are just two of the many concerns a concours-class owner should resolve. Not only does the car need to look good, it should also be in tiptop running condition. That's why not a few proud owners make it a point to drive their pride and joy even if only on weekends.

"For shows I judge in Hong Kong," said Allen, "I ask owners to drive their cars to the venue. I also make it a point to check if the lights, wipers and windows are all functioning."

Most important, however, all the parts that make up the car, including its engine and under chassis, should be as authentic as possible. Restoring a vintage car to the point of overdoing it by using chrome, for example, when one shouldn't, or incorporating parts from another to a different period can also cause correct purists to frown.

During a previous judging, for instance, Fraizer had to declare points on an impeccably maintained 1956 Chevy Camaro after he noticed one glaring anomaly. Its rims were instead some mag wheels or as after-the-car sans first manufacturer.

"Perhaps the owner wanted to upgrade the car's look by using rims from the 1960s," said Fraizer. "Whatever his reason was, he lost points by doing so."

The vintage car owner's reasons for spending a fortune on a passion is not too many people can readily afford are numerous. Earning a handsome profit for all his troubles isn't a prime motivator.

"I've often been asked to name my price," said Armand L. owner of a 1959 Mercedes 190 SL 280SE. "It's not for sale. It's irreplaceable. Besides, my daughter Bianca wants to have it someday."

To a certain extent, buying cars is like buying artworks. Only time will tell whether they'll become classics or not, he said. It makes interesting sense, however, to invest in models and brands with a heritage and proven track record.

"You don't get a car thinking that it would appreciate in value," added Antonio, whose car won second place in the modern class. "You get a car primarily because you like it. You get it for what it is."

Cojuangcojuan takes pride in the fact that his 1956 Mercedes Benz 190SL, third place winner in the Classic Age class, is one of only five cars of its kind in the country. Of that number, only two (including his) are in good running condition.

"For me, the 1950s offer total collection while the four cars combined," he said. "Personally, I see the potential revenue of a particular car's rarity."

Cojuangcojuan sought the help of Claudia, who heads a group of hobbyists who call themselves Route 66, in restoring his Mercedes Benz to its original condition. He could very well be echoing the sentiments of owners like hers.

"The challenge wasn't confined to a particular area," said Claudia. "It was in putting it piece by piece. It involved the collaboration of different people working together as one. It was really time-consuming since we also had to do extensive research."

Like a proud father, Aldaguet, owner of four Mercedes, treats his cars like his children. For the show, the Cebu-based businessman had to ship his 1968 Porsche 912 to Manila.

"I don't have any favorites," Aldaguet said. "Like kids, each car has its own characteristics, which makes it dear to you."

At the same time, however, he likened the magic he felt when he saw his dream Porsche in the flesh for the first time to his initial romance for the very first time. It's something that's supposed to be felt, not rationalized, he explained.

That like a woman, you admire the car as a whole," he said. "I just think the real appeal of Porsche is unbeatable. Nothing gets me as excited as seeing a Porsche."

POST-WAR: 2nd place: 1948 MG TC owned by Ben Silvestre

MODERN best in class: 1973 Ferrari aka "Boxer GTB" owned by Michael Aguilar

LATE Golden Era: 2nd place: 1966 Chevrolet Corvette with Francis Alba and Max Claudio

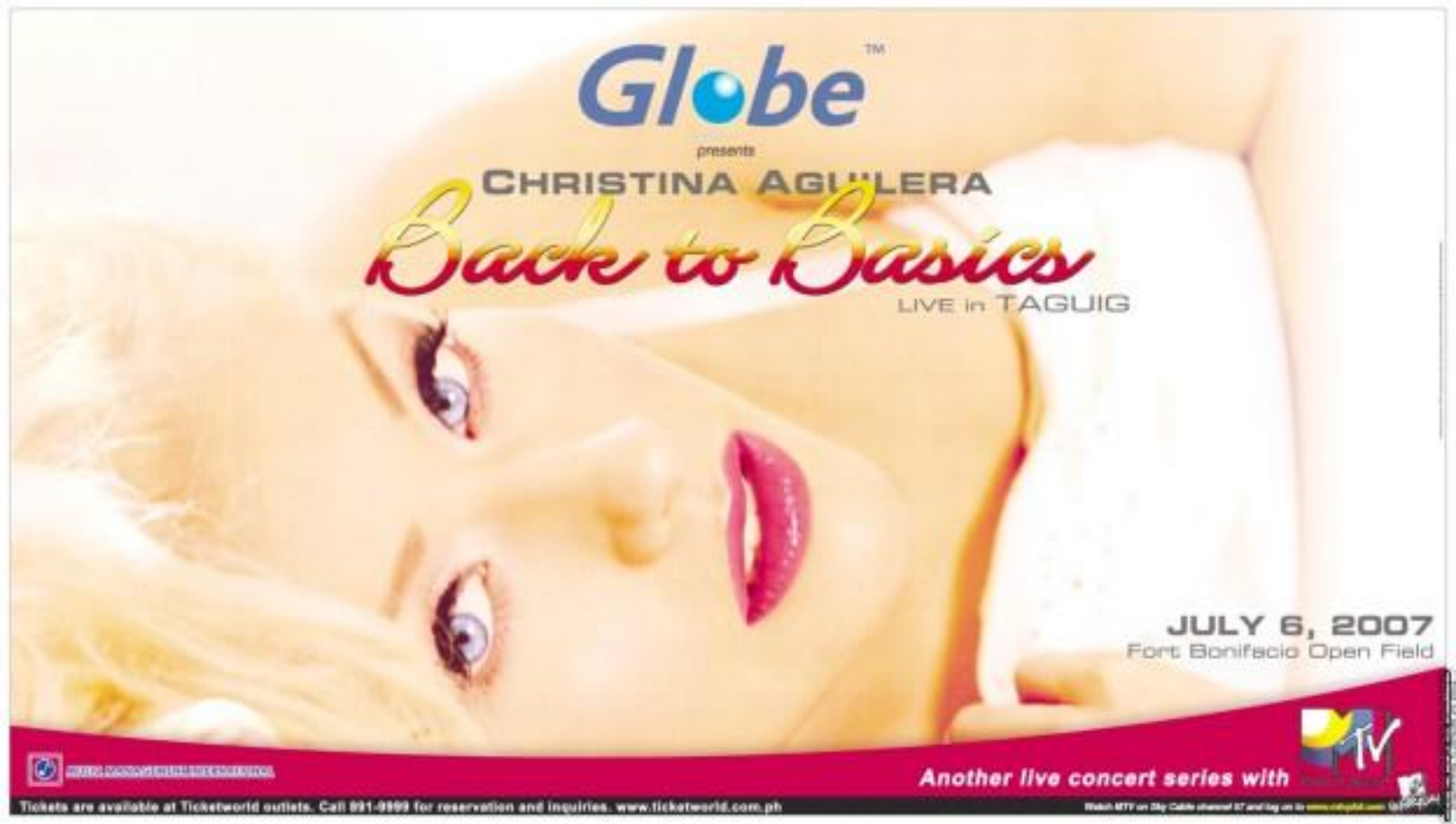
PRESERVATION Class award: 1962 Triumph TR4 owned by Amado Castro

EARLY Golden Era: 3rd place: 1952 Porsche 356B owned by Maurice Cruz

MODERN class 3rd place: 1969 Volkswagen Kombi owned by Cholo Mayuga

LATE Golden Era: 3rd place: 1967 Jaguar XJ6S owned by Eli Bicaldo

CLASSIC Age 3rd place: 1956 Mercedes Benz 190SL owned by Manny Concepcion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MIND PLAY: Curios that stir the imagination

SINGULAR SENSATIONS: Handpainted conversation plates

DESIGN DIVINE: Contemporary designs from Alessi

New design address

105 Rada houses exclusive shops offering cutting-edge house decor and essentials

Text by Anne A. Jardines
Photos by Rudy Espero

DESIGN AND HOBBY CHARACTER ABC, the alchemy that breathes life and magic into space. Inspired objects stir the imagination so that living spaces can depart from the dull, monochromatic showroom look. Curios evoke a space idea and become inseparable from the owner's persona.

Skids runs a cabinet of novelty curiosity, interesting ornaments and other home décor and essentials at 105 Rada (G/F BCI Building, Rada Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City). The place houses shops offering design options for the forward-looking Filipinos.

The shops are Cosmic, Stonehouse Trend, Thompson Lighting, Bikasera and Kitchen Studio—trademark brands known for quality and avant-garde design.

"The shop in shop concept was conceived in our desire to bring the best to new design firsts here and around the world," said Raphael Cabrer, managing director of Kitchen Studio.

The newly-minted Sentul Alessi, first introduced in the country in 1998, is back (though transformed) to Trend, the Danish classic, and to three different collections on hire, the Classic Alessi, called a "dream factory"; the more exclusive Officina Alessi; and the most inclusive A Di Alessi.

The Danish knows design so keenly it is said. Cast while cutlery lamp, chair not where was invented in Denmark. Danish designers have come up with designs improving on them. Scandinavian Trend is also the exclusive distributor of lifestyle brands Stelton, Iris Hantverk, PP Möbler, Louis Poulsen, Holm Hansen and Norman Copenhagen.

Timeless interior objects and designs led television acquired globally are likewise available at the Center. They include home accessories, lighting and furniture that go beyond the readymade to impress ever-evolving personal tastes. Customers can check out such brands as Normann, Diner Lighting, Tord Boontje for Artecnica Inc., and Jaime Hayon for Metalarte.

Norman for homes and quirky eclecticism, Normann is one of the oldest running ateliers and producers of fine masterpieces and homeware based in Milan. Diner Lighting boasts of a roster of award-winning designers that paved the way for the establishment of the Italian lighting industry in the '50s, an industry that has since wowed the world with its breathtaking designs.

Bike and remote items a dwell! Laser-cut floral patterns of Tord Boontje bring back decorativeness at a time when minimalism has become mainstream. Contemporary Spanish design house Vincen has a repertoire ranging from graphic to peculiar designs. It is better known for its signature Digital Mediterranean Baroque.

Kitchen Studio is a design company specializing in functional kitchen art—design to suit the cutting-edge lifestyles. Inspired as well of Italian cabinets and shelf systems, the company offers brands such as Logo, a specialist in woodwork; Poliform, which offers sleek and conservative fixtures and furnishes; and Compact, which offers innovative kitchen materials and products. The Kitchen Studio also specializes in kitchen design, from Machine assistive English to Asian Modern.

Thompson Lighting is the exclusive distributor of Delta Light (Belgium), which makes unique lighting fixtures. It also distributes Modo (Japan), Estiba (Italy), Arte (Italy), Eti Switch (Australia), Serenalight (Italy) and Ubiqua (Australia) intelligent systems.

Thompson Lighting provides technologically advanced lighting systems and fixtures to residential, commercial and architectural markets.

Skasera offers glass mosaic for floors and walls.

E-mail the author at ajardines@inquirer.com.ph

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SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2007 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER D1

Sunday LIFESTYLE

ROOTS AND WINGS
Cathy Babao-Gabella

Creating family summers to remember

'Are we there yet?' Taking the kids along for vacation trips is family bonding at its best

THE SUMMER OF 1969 IS one that is forever etched in my mother's memory.

I was 4 years old when my parents decided to take me to my first-ever trip to Baguio. Traveling to what was like forever in a cream-colored VW Beetle, I sat in the back-seat singing nursery rhymes, and holding conversation non-stop to my Kuala bear. My father had one rule that I have taken to heart to this day: [illegible] my sister and my own children—don't waste your time sleeping while on a road trip, take in the scenery and learn as much as you can because you'll never know if you will pass that way again.

We motored on the now-non-existent Circle and shouted into a hostel on Session Road. In 1969, Session Road was not yet so crazy-busy as it is today, but to my 4-year-old eyes it was noisy and smelly enough to keep me awake. I vividly recall, and my mother confirms the memory, being perched on the window sill, alternately wailing and complaining about the heat until he came, begging for air-conditioning and swearing we go back home.

In spite of the night-mare I created for my poor parents, today when I look at pictures from that trip, I mostly remember what was fun and joyful—images of a 4-year-old astride a pony, bundled up in a bright red poncho, posing by a bed of flowers across Mansion house, holding her binary eyed mother's hand, grinning impishly into the camera.

Summer is a wonderful time to make memories with your children. Family vacations play an important part in our memory of childhood. They are times when everyone is together, on the same schedule, sacking meals together and having a good time.

When on a holiday, lighten up, leave the all-nighters at the office and enjoy your children as much as you can.

As a parent, regardless of economic status, I think it is imperative that we take time off our work and be with our children, even for a

CONTINUED D4

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mommy, ang lakas mo sa Globe

Parents who teach their kids pass on their spiritual heritage and moral values to their children; they also save some money

Brave, new world of homeschooling

By Cathy S. Baloso-Gobello

IN THE 2004 TEEN MOVIE "Mean Girls," Cady Heron (Lindsay Lohan) has just moved to a small town outside of Chicago from Africa. All her life, up to the time she enters the public high school where she meets the mean girls who make her life miserable, Cady has been homeschooled. Her unique educational status has stand-out in two ways—she is academically advanced but the general population has a hard time accepting her as such. "She's a freak—what?"

In the United States and in most countries around the world, homeschooling is legal and before 1980, homeschooling was the most common and accepted mode of education. But United States presidents were homeschooled by their mothers.

In the Philippines, homeschooling has started to gain some ground though it is not as popular as it is in the US. The Master's Academy (TMA), a Christian school set up by the Christian Community Fellowship (CCF), has been running a homeschool program since 1999. Its homeschool program, from preschool through grade school, has been accredited by the Department of Education.

There are other institutions that offer homeschooling as well. The School of Tomorrow Philippines (http://www.sotphil.org/index.htm) helps provide training and curriculum materials for those who wish to homeschool.

Many parents who have opted to homeschool their children are quite happy with the results. Among the most popular homeschooling graduates in the country are the Tiaoqui children—Drew, Jay, Paul, Beth and Caroline. They all excelled in academics and sports when they entered high school and college. They were all homeschooled by their mother Dennis Tiaoqui, who helped set up TMA at CCF.

Their father, CCF's senior pastor Boyd Tiaoqui, would help out in those early homeschooling years by teaching Bible lessons and math.

Kate Ina de Jesus, admissions rates coordinator for organization of TMA's homeschooling program, says there are several benefits to a homeschooling program, foremost of which is the spiritual heritage that parents can pass on to their children.

"This helps the child know God in a more personal way, as he appreciates the world God has created as he contemplates Christian values," she says.

Quality of life is another benefit of the program. Dr. Jesus says parents are able to spend quality time with their children during the most formative years, and in families with more than one child it is common to see siblings share the experience of working and studying together at home.

Socially well-adjusted

And contrary to popular belief that homeschooled children tend to lack social skills, research has shown that socialization in the home is more real, natural and varied.

Children who are in schools are segregated by age and are horizontally socialized with their peers. They have little opportunity to relate to adults or children of other ages, which results in the tendency to conform to the immature behavior of their peers because of their lack of older role models to emulate.

Studies on self-concept or self-esteem of homeschooled children showed that 90 percent of those surveyed fell into the 50th percentile. So Jesus says co-ops for parents and their children also offer opportunities for socialization and extra-curricular classes like art, music and PE.

Then, of course, there is the academic edge that homeschooled children get.

Ani Torres, administrative coordinator for academics of TMA, shows me studies from the book, "The Right Choice—Homeschooling" by Christopher Klicka, which states a study conducted in 1998 where 20,000 homeschooled children in the US were tested and compared with students in private or public schools. Results showed homeschooled students did extraordinarily well in comparison with the mainstream average. In every subject and at every grade level, homeschooled students scored significantly higher than their public and private school counterparts.

Commitment

What does it take to homeschool your child?

Grace Zorilla, who has homeschooled her daughter Bea for the last four years, says that commitment plays a huge role in the success of homeschooling.

THE MASTER'S Academy website

"You really have to be diligent and committed to give your time to your child. Any child you need to prepare," she says.

Zorilla adds her greatest joy is "seeing learning along with Bea, who is now 12. "It really is such a thrill! Isee a sparkling again with her!"

Dr. Jesus and Torres agree that a homeschooler has to be a certified teacher.

Bonding bedtime routine for mom and baby

"YOU CAN TELL WHEN CHILDREN don't get good sleep," observes Nancy Bernal, teacher and founder of preschool center Second Mom.

"For a number of years now, my co-teachers and I have been playing second mom to young preschool kids who are enrolled in our school for preparatory education. The few hours we spend with them as primary caregivers give us ample opportunity to observe, then analyze their behavior during the day.

"Usually, we share our observations with their moms or nanny to find out possible reasons why their children are eventually behaving."

One major factor that is often the culprit behind a child's sluggishness or irritational behavior is lack of sleep. When they have had sleep problems the night before, their mealtime or their performance. They lack attention and are oftentimes irritable. On the contrary, kids who have good sleeping habits turn up at the center in high spirits, are alert and able to get immersed into the day's activities.

Jenny's realistic portrayal of kids' behavior as a result of sleep habits validates clinical studies that emphasize the need for his boys and young ones to have good sleep.

"It is during sleep that growth hormones are released three times more than normal," says Dr. Richard Jones, a sleep specialist and vice president of the Philippine Society of Sleep Medicine.

He adds: "If sleep of babies is interrupted, then there may be a change in the cycle of, for example, the release of hormones that are needed for babies to optimally grow up.

To ensure good sleep, Dr. Luis Rivera, active pediatric consultant at both Makati Medical Center and Asian Hospital, recommends a bedtime routine which moms can do religiously with their babies. This was developed by Johnson & Johnson in the United States after a study done by pediatrician sleep expert Jodi Mindell, associate director of the Sleep Disorder Center at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, US.

The bedtime routine is easy. The first step is to bathe the baby with warm water, using a gentle soap. The second step is to massage the baby with Johnson's Baby Bedtime Lotion which is made with lavender extracts. The final step is for the mom and baby to enjoy a bonding moment. The room should be dark and free from any disruptive noise. Once the baby recognizes the relaxation of the routine, he can drift off happily to dreamland.

"Moms will now fully experience the pleasure of motherhood without the stress and discomfort associated with baby's sleepless nights," says Via Alunin, Johnson's baby brand manager.

BEST Bond and daughter Isabel

MESSAGE Via Isaba shows mom Johnson's Baby Bedtime Lotion. The gentle strokes give the soothing "I love you, baby" feeling.

SECOND TIME mom Daphne Dania Pore and 8-month-old Lily enjoy a quiet moment.

Academy of digital

IN spite of the growing demand for [illegible] graphic artists and think [illegible] artist is a good source of income. [illegible] course is about to change.

Since 2001, the First Academy of Arts in Makati City has been helping students with [illegible] digital arts.

Inspired by the success [illegible] spawned in digital arts [illegible] say believers. Filipinos [illegible] untapped resource for the [illegible] and for digital artists.

There's a lot of frequently [illegible] tions to help grads prospect [illegible]

What do the arts involve [illegible] digital artist?

Individuals who wish to [illegible] as digital artists must be skilled [illegible] provincial knowledge of [illegible] artists ability in order to [illegible] Most importantly, digital [illegible] also know the basics of [illegible] must have the ability to effectively [illegible] with computer graphic applications [illegible] as Photoshop and Illustrator [illegible] or applications. These artists [illegible] comp. He or she should be [illegible] and knowledgable in 3D [illegible] and effects.

What is the job outlook [illegible] artists/animators?

A huge demand for graphic [illegible] comes from companies [illegible] time in computer and web [illegible] and interactive Internet [illegible]

There is also a big opportunity [illegible] latter designers who want to [illegible] video production [illegible] digital arts also opens up a [illegible] presentation in film/ video [illegible] movie production, concert [illegible] colors, advertising, gaming, [illegible] ware.

Is the tuition expensive?

No. First Academy of Creative [illegible] tuition are probably the lowest [illegible] country. It also has payment [illegible]

Does the First Academy of Creative [illegible] Arts offer job assistance to [illegible]

It assists students in getting [illegible] and/or part-time work on a [illegible] ree Counseling Services.

What is the usual duration [illegible] course?

Program duration depends [illegible] course. However, the average [illegible] these programs takes [illegible] 18. However, if a student [illegible] plete program on a weekend [illegible]

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- ✦ "So You're Thinking About Homeschooling: Fifteen Families Show How You Can Do It" by Lisa Whelchel
- ✦ "The Homeschooling Handbook: How to Give the Whole World to Your Child" (Time Life)

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to homeschool successfully. The Divided only requires that the parent-teacher must be at least a college degree holder though not necessarily in education majors.

"A parent also needs to allocate at least four hours [for K5 to Grade 7] and two hours [for 8th] of interaction time every weekday," Torres says. This does not even include the time that must be set apart by the parent-teacher to prepare for his or her lessons.

A class schedule must be set apart each day and given priority to protect the routine of instruction and study time. As TMA points out, lessons are required to calculate what is prepared, and are provided with regular thorough workshops and assessments throughout the year.

Quarterly examinations and final examinations are given by the parent-teacher and evaluated subject to the standards set out by the DepEd.

The cost of homeschooling ranges from P20,000-P30,000 per school year.

At TMA, the current cost of tuition for a first grade student is approximately P30,000 per school year. For those who opt to homeschool on their own, the cost ranges from P20,000-P30,000 per year. It is substantially less expensive than a well-directed school where tuition plus books averages between P50,000-P80,000 per school year. Multiply that by the number of children and you will see why savings are another benefit in homeschooling.

Zoe Ella's daughter is now set to enter the traditional school in preparation for high school. The young girl has used all her necessary means but her mother says it has not been easy to find a school that would be a good match for Bea. "At this school she got bored while she ran in," she says.

Zoe Ella recounts how last year they had a bad to put her in one of the private schools in the south of Manila, but after one month the young girl told her mother: "Mu hemic nay pull me out of this school because I already know everything they are teaching me so let's not waste our money." So it was back to homeschooling for Bea and mom.

This year however, the Zorillas are set on placing her in a traditional school in preparation for high school and the world outside.

True enough, Bea has had her fair share of some girl (and boys) while using in some of the classes her parents are considering for her.

Moving into the real world and out of the confines of home is a reality she has learned to accept and prepare for. Even she assures she has asked her dad to re-enlist as a unfortunate reason. Now, don't say mean homeschooler!

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The Master's Academy

HOME SCHOOL

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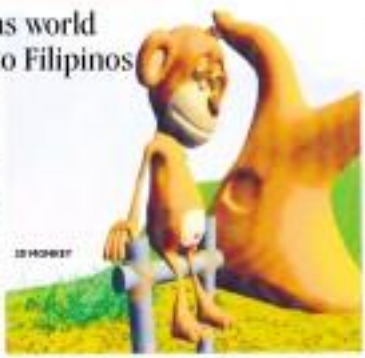

3D HOBBIT

VECTOR art by Gloria Maloney

MONSTERS by BC Sanchez

...any who approximately seven or 10 months.

When makes First Academy of Computer Arts different from other Philippine schools offer this course training?

Aside from school's three-pronged Digital Art education in the country, First Academy of Computer Arts has built a strong record of success, providing students with practical real-world skills using cross-platform hardware.

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Short courses include Animal Digital Filmmaking, Digital Photographic, Digital Comics, Manga Illustration, Junior Digital Arts and Digital Scrapbook.

The programs of First Academy of Computer Arts are taught by professional digital artists through practical and hands-on work using Tech Macintosh and Windows.

The First Academy of Computer Arts is at 3/F Saville Building, #130 Timog Avenue corner Sct. Ol Timog (Boundary) Avenues, Makati. Call 9982724 or 20 for a free consultation and workshop. Visit www.firstacademy.com.ph

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mommy, ang lakas mo sa Globe

STRAWBERRY Shortcake and Friends

Sweet entertainment at Ayala Malls

SUMMER COULDN'T BE ANY SWEETER with the Big Berry Bake Off at the Ayala Malls from May to June. Strawberry Shortcake, one of the most popular dolls of all time and holds the distinction as the first scented doll ever launched in the market, will hold a series of original live stories in nineteen Ayala Malls.

Strawberry Shortcake and her friends first entered pop culture as characters in a series of greeting cards originally created by American Greetings. She was first released in the early 1980s, and then re-launched in 1991 and 2003.

Princess Strawberry Shortcake and her friends live and play in their magical world known as Strawberryland, with the staging of Strawberry Shortcake's Original Live Stories at the Cinema Activity Center, May 6, 11:00 a.m., 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

The tour will continue at the Blacked Marker Activity Center, May 11 - 13, with shows at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. The next stop will be at the Alabang Town Center Activity Center, May 16-20, 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

The shows will make a pit stop at the Trinoma Activity Center, May 25-27, 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Finally, Strawberry Shortcake and Friends will head off to Ayala Center Cebu, June 1-3, with shows at the South Surface Decking of the Ayala Center Cebu, 1 p.m., 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Bank leads fundraising drive for education

IN LINE WITH THE CELEBRATION OF THE "National Savings Consciousness Week," PSBank raised the highest donation among the Chamber of Thrift Bank (CTB) members for "Tulong Kaya Para sa Batang Iba," a joint project of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and Department of Education.

The objective of the campaign was to raise funds that would upgrade public elementary schools facilities. The fundraising project also served as BSP's effort to raise public awareness on the importance of regular usage and circulation of coins.

CTB members were among the institutions that participated in the project. The Philippine Savings Bank, an active CTB member, collected the highest amount raised by a single institution, with coin banks strategically located in all 110 PSBank branches all over the country.

PSBank is also conducting unpublished endeavors that are geared toward uplifting the lives of Filipinos through better access to education.

PSBank is a leading savings bank, with resources that enable it to aggressively compete in retail banking, having set its goal to providing the continuously growing needs of the consumer market in consistency with its vision of being the country's consumer and retail bank of choice.

Creating family summers...

From page D1

few days or weeks, when they are away from school.

If you can afford it, travel as much as you can—by land, by sea, by air. Plan on going someplace new and explore the area with your children or revisit favorite destinations. Whatever you choose to do, vacation time becomes even more meaningful if your children are involved in the decision making every step of the way.

First find out what you want to do and what you can afford. Every year, my husband and I draw up a wish list of the places we wanted to see or revisit with the children and work on our logistics. We have a budget in mind and, we present it to the kids and then ask them which places they would like to visit.

Normally, we try to choose one new place we would like to explore and one that we have to return to time and again.

Involve your children in the planning. Your children's expectations and concerns need to be an essential part of your planning. After all, it's everybody's vacation, not just yours. They will look forward to the new places you will explore if they know there will be things for them to enjoy as well.

Get travel brochures, read up on the destination, and the internet together for photographs and articles on the places you will visit including the hotel you plan to stay in. Children are highly visual—whether they are 5, 14, 21 years old is for incoming answers over a forthcoming trip.

Essentials

Make sure to bring your essentials, more so if you are going to new and unfamiliar places with young children. Children live in their own comfort zones and younger children will experience some anxieties and stress during the disruption of their routine, everyday life. They may worry about whether they'll be able to sleep in hotel beds without their stuffed animals or whether they'll be too scared to fly on an airplane.

The Family Education website suggests that vacation plans should not be discussed in earnest with young children until a week or two weeks before the departure date. In doing so, you minimize the worries your children may have about the forthcoming trip.

Don't forget the all-important pillow or blanket and the must-sleep-with stuffed toy. These seemingly small items can make or break a good night's sleep.

Practice democracy while on vacation. A family vacation is the perfect venue for teaching kids how to practice weighing pros-cons and making informed decisions.

Whenever possible, involve them in choosing which route to take, what restaurants to go to, which food to order on the menu. If the choice is wonderful, make sure to give praise for the recommendation. If it turns out bad, refrain from teasing and just use it as learning time needs to be had and promote many opportunities to learn new lessons and experiences.

Take lots of photographs! Whenever you decide to go, make sure to bring a camera and record every imaginable event. My 16-year old is quite the DJ when it comes to documenting our family vacations from start to finish, and we are richer in our family memories because of her diligence.

Up to a decade ago, we only had albums or scrapbooks as repositories for our photographs, but nowadays, there are a myriad of websites that offer free image hosting and photo sharing where you can upload your summer memories, so you can set up an album and share with the rest of the world.

Some of the good ones I have tried are http://flickr.com, http://photobucket.com, http://webshots.com and http://dropshots.com. There are countless sites that you can use for free to organize your photos.

For me, the best benefit that the digital age brings is that these photos can now be stored forever—safe from dust, acid erosion, natural calamities or the ravages of time. They are virtual treasures that even my grandchildren will be able to enjoy years later.

E-mail the author at cathypadilla@gmail.com

Visit http://shoppingbymotives.com

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Transplanting the past

By Thelma Sioson San Juan
Photos by Nes Jardin
Contributors

WE WERE A VAN LOAD OF cultural lec loose for the weekend, taking the three-hour drive to Marinig, Binan last week. For months now, we had been egging on a friend to get us an invite to the private estate in Binan where old houses from various places are reportedly reassembled and reconstructed. Most, if not all, of these are well-known ancestral houses from Luzon which had gone on the block and would have been reduced into rubble or buried in the conflicting memories of their previous occupants, had their surviving parts not been bought by a collector/builder and rebuilt in his coastal estate in Binan.

Finally, last Sunday, Jimmy Laya gathered a mix of writers/scholars, architects, culture officials and lifestyle types for the trip. It didn't turn out to be that long, owing mainly to the hilarious commentary with encyclopedic erudition/s of people, events and gossip—both ancient and recent—by book author Bhanu "Jimmy" Tiwa, whose landmark book with Eddie Cordero Fernando, "Philippine Ancestral Houses," has been a reference for anyone interested in heritage architecture and period lifestyle. On that trip, Jimmy made my iPod useless; we pondered to interest him.

The spread of Binan conversation ranging from "story" stories to any of the world. We gasped in disbelief and near-silence (loose, unceremonious comments from our dear cultural crowd couldn't be helped, like one's involuntary muscles) at the sight of ancestral old "ancestral" houses transplanted to this green open space, above from their original environs. There's nothing like it in the country, I said. Jimmy noted that the only such resettlement he had seen was in the US East Coast.

Arsenal and his wife Toni welcomed us to the biggest house in their estate—a reconstruction of a Bulacan home.

From there, we looked out to the newest addition that was still being built, the Hispanic home from Quiapo that was in the corner lot just because its side was "ancestral by the culture arena" since it was the original home of EVP Joe Arcilla and there was but the structure would be lost forever. But it was just to be as the building is now constructed from the salvageable parts of the old structure. It is more than 400 sq m and you had to search your imagination to believe that such an expansive residence had once been located on today's congested Manila.

In the morning sun, the group walked from one house to another, climbing each nearly finished structure. There's the house from Candaba, Pampanga, which veteran editor and art book author Johnny Gaston and his wife, book author, Chita, remembered clearly from years ago.

There are other houses—from Sta. Cruz

TRANSPLANTING P3

THIS house was from Candaba, Pampanga.

MMO Sense with his muses

CREATIVE director Robbie Carmona with his cool dad Derek

INTRICA Ramon Diaz gown to wear by Luisa Cuepo

A fashion show to stir the senses

SUMMER FASHION—IS IT ALL ABOUT bikinis and the designer flood boutiques? Despite the dominance of beautiful Couture, Tessa Prieto-Valdes' recent fashion caravan ups and the stylish way to go for those of us who are either not endowed with enough of the good physical features or overly gifted with the not so good, five-star resort fashion shows have shown off the skills of our local designers in coming up with great ideas for enhancing one's positive endowments and minimizing the negatives.

Alliance Française de Manille and the French Embassy in the Philippines, in collaboration with the Bonifacio Place, had a unique fashion show called Five Senses. The French-Filipino performances used fashion to promote the French cultural treasures in collaboration with the country's top fashion designers, who all drew inspiration from the theme of "awakening the senses."

Especially dramatic and arresting were the creations of romantic designer Patrice Ramos-Diaz. Her ordinarians, "moving mushrooms" designs received loud praises—even as what of many chosen creations reduce the model wearing the design clipped and she needed another model's help for her to rise up. Was it truly a wardrobe malfunction or all part of the showcasing of our senses?

Style guru Luisa Cuepo actually tried on the gowns that same day, all for the sake of thorough journalism, of course. Although she did find it a bit difficult to get into the work, the gown was a stunner, a clever work of art! And as many women are believers in "pain for vain," I'm sure the gown will sell!

As one of the highlights of the ongoing French Spring in Manila 2007, the fashion show is just one of the many events happening throughout the city—all designed to bring the Filipino and French community together through culture, art and fashion.

The next event to look for is music from the Romeo and Juliet Opera performed at the Rockwell Tent on May 11, 9 p.m. This will surely be another fantastic event for those fun summer nights.

So French Spring is complete without world-renowned Fenerbahçe. The French Spring Food Festival will be held at Aptal Restaurant, Bonifacio Philippine Plaza, from 10-14. Lunchtime, that epitome of French style, will appease this affair.

TESSA! Tessa Prieto-Valdes

Even if the gown is slim, tight and difficult for a woman to try on, it's a work of art. Women like me believe in 'pain for vain'

Towering launch

Fashion was again on the menu at the launch of Gil Sky Suites, a premier, towering residential condo in Ortigas City. The exciting new landmark received up the launch but a few notches with its three days of action-packed events. The first two were style highlights of the season—a fascinating, exciting have almost all brunch fashion walkabout by brunch and an elegant, sophisticated high-couture extravaganza by Jesse Enrico.

All scenes of society were covered in the planning. The first day launch—complete with an after-show dance party by Embassy Super Club—was a presence for the party-jaders and future tycoons. The Saturday night crowd, composed mostly of already-rich tycoons and well-heeled ladies, enjoyed the lounge party of Hero. This was after the stylish show of Jesse Enrico, who continued that he got his inspiration from the works of Francois Olson.

The temperature soared even more on the third day, with a Celebrity Poker Match for Charity, proceeds of which went to the well-deserving ABS-CBN Foundation. The poker clash turned out to be Epi Quizon, who won half a million pesos for Gina Lopez's projects.

The dynamic father-daughter team of Bodjie and Bryan Laz, assisted by PR guru Joji Dilagenang, have to be very proud of their chose-day feast, the perfect kick-off to launch a landmark tower in Quezon City.

Expat Pinay charity event

Fashion and charity really make a perfect match. Many prominent Filipino talent are generously. There are many exciting projects to assist, benefit and uplift the lives of our fellow Filipinos.

The expat Filipino communities all over the world, particularly in the United States, are major supporters of numerous foundations, especially the ABS-CBN Foundation. A group of Filipinos living around the San Francisco area organized a fashion show to raise funds for the victims of Typhoon Reming in Albay. Held through MOD CDR Foundation's Gigi Chenliyt.

The organizers commissioned Bernadette to preserve his creations at the Santa Clara Convention Center. Former top models and beauty celebrities were living in the El modeled the designs.

The models, such as Vivian Velez-Rivera and Rosa Rosanes, showed they had not lost their poise or grace. They were received down the ramp just like during old times. The other models were Diane Bonifacio-Fuentes, Beth de Mesa, Gina Alajar-Haas, Tet Villanueva, Michelle de Leo, Lisa Ilio and Carol Chua, who all showed off their modeling skills. The guests were awed by Salvati's creations.

Almost a thousand very generous People attended the successful "Trunk Sales!" show. Others were support, just by purchasing tickets and items, like Bert San Diego of Bebert's Window Coverings, were the main mile by sponsoring the show as well.

Creative director Rhonda Jose and Alpha de Guzman of Golden Hope Presentations helped make the show successful and memorable. The main sponsor was our very own, Philippine Airlines.

Here's to one thought to leave you with this Sunday: Even if there are many of our kababayan so far away from home, they all come together to help the homeland when a national calamity happens. After all, wherever we may be, we are all Filipinos deep inside, neither forgetting our heritage nor our homeland and countrymen.

E-mail me at angel.bacos@inquirer.com.ph

BRIDAL shop of Patrice Ramos-Diaz at 3 Salcedo Place, Salcedo Village

ACTIVISTS Isabel Granada and Carlo Humphries

TV director Edgar Mortiz and musician TV host Willie Revillame

GENEROUS donation to ABS-CBN Foundation from Globe Bulahan, Tim Yap, Dimie Lee, Paul Mercado, Sea Princess and Delfin Lee

TALENTED Ayanna Silva and "Pinoy Big Brother" housemates Jason Gainza and Say Alonzo

PHYSICIAN-COUPLE Hayden Kho and Vicki Belo, with Dimie and Delfin Lee

BIG charity poker winner Epi Quizon (in shades) with Carlos Agulo

ROSE Libongco of Sofitel Philippine Plaza

SAUDI Arabian Ambassador Mohammad Ameen Mohammad Wadi, Cynthia Cuerian, and Ms. Bean, executive assistant manager of Sofitel Philippine Plaza

SRI Lankan Ambassador Wijetunga Mudiyanselage Samarawickrama

BEHIND Schneider, GM of Sofitel Philippine Plaza; Philippe Delmotte, founding president of Le Club; and French Ambassador Gerard Chesnot

DESIGNER Patrice Ramos-Diaz with niece Anne Quito, Lois and Mel

TOP designer Jose Salvio, model Divas Medina and food expert Gaita Fores

MAY Ong and Joey Mead

TUBT Quitorio, Olivier Dhellgen, Lulu Tan Gan, Victoria Bacha, Joji Llorca, Raja Laurel

ALAIN Fortin, first secretary of the French embassy; Frances Alby; Frank Alby; Lulu Tan Gan; and Bernard Plasse, president of Le Club (French Chamber of Commerce)

THE HOUSES are being reconstructed around a plaza to evoke the Hispanic Philippine town of old.

ONE of the 14 structures at the 40-hectare estate

THE BAHAY KUBO ancestral house now done in Quiapo, now being reconstructed in Batasan. This was the first home of the UP College of Fine Arts.

Transplanting the past

ANCESTRAL homes adorn a new image in the amusing summer retreat the Asian nations in Batasan. They stand seemingly at random, but the scene is laid out like the town plaza of old.

From page E1

and Sinumbi (Manila), Bahay-Na, Pangasinan and Quezon. In the latter, 4 members of the group studied a feature—a trap door, which the wife of the household used to flee the "visitor" (town leader) and escape out the traps and the family ate.

It was refreshing to hear many naives he recollections of the unique features of each home. We hoped that this rescue and advice of Philippine heritage had raised around the country for architectural and cultural traditions, encountering many of these homes we were touring and consuming their history to memory.

The architects in the group—conservation advocates This Tarabilla and Jorge Ignacio—stated how important it is to use the right construction technology and materials (be in stone, lime, instead of cement) in the reconstruction effort, as experts that should look back to the period in which each house was built.

But all—including Gabriel Casino of the Philippine preservation this Jardin and the sound to hard-to-please mentor Simon Villegas—agreed that Antonio's effort is a unique one. Aimed to an art collector with social interest in paintings or of an old house was offered to him three years ago. That led to an obsession with old houses.

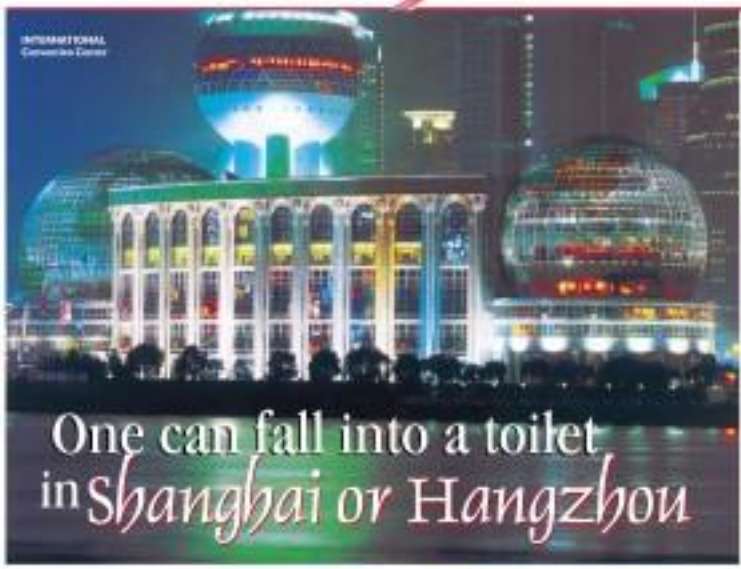
There are 14 such structures in the 40-hectare estate by the sea, to the east open space, the houses are "breathe," unlike, you imagine, at their birthplaces of a century ago. And, in the quiet of the night, you imagine, they used to speaking, telling their stories and secrets of old.

Now this estate is be opened to the public, what a destination it would be! And what an education for today's generation.

THE ESTATE may yet be a hot topic down-can to educate the young generation of Filipinos.

IT is important to use the right construction technology and materials in the reconstruction effort.

Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel



One can fall into a toilet in Shanghai or Hangzhou

The Chinese cities have seen spectacular transformation in just the last 15 years

By Lin Acuzar-Flores
Contributor

ON OFFICE DUMBO OF 29 LAWYERS of the Platon Martinez Flores San Pedro Leuda Law Firm go on an annual trips abroad. The married ones dutifully bringing their spouses along. This year, 43 of us flew in Shanghai and Hangzhou, both the oldest and the most industrial metropolises of China.

In Shanghai, we boarded the Maglev train, which practically flies just above the ground and hurtles one to his destination in seven minutes, as compared to a car ride which would take 45 minutes without traffic. We were told that only Germany has a similar train. Alinda Santiago, who arranges and accompanies all our trips, took my arm and sighed, long and deep.

"You tired?" I asked.

"No real," she said, "that one country doesn't have all these." She wasn't just referring to the train, she meant the whole of Shanghai, and I had to agree with her. Except for the toilets, I thought, making a mental memo to tell her about it later.

The Pudong district, all of 522 sq km, was simple farmland only 15 years ago. Now it is a well-planned metropolis. From the 268-degree view afforded by the glass-walled second level of the Pearl of the Oriental TV Tower, we saw the Nanpu and Yangpu bridges arching over the Huangpu River.

Skyscrapers ("sky-scrapiness" said Gidday-san Chinese guide) pointed to the sky. The elevated Inner Ring Road curved its bone which drove straight highways. In between were generous spans of green, parks in town and facilities. Barely. All these built in the last 15 years... if only we could do as well.

Not that overarching old area was down to shape the image that Shanghai is building as a city that is reforming and opening to the world as a major hub of business and commerce. Foreign colonizers had built sturdy buildings in classic European styles in the 1840s, and these have been preserved to remind the Chinese of the time foreigners dominated the country.

We strolled in the meridian along the west avenue of the Nanjing Road, classic edifices on our right, the river on our left, flowers and benches here and there, and it seemed as if we were in Europe. The only reminder that we were in Shanghai was the enormous red streamer with Chinese calligraphy running down the whole length of one majestic building.

On a leisurely boat ride around the Huangpu River one breezy morning, we missed the shore. All the buildings around were outlined with energetically-placed lights.

Sun's wife

By Sun Yat Sen is familiar to us as the man who triggered the Chinese Revolution. We were brought to the residence of his wife, Soong Ching Ling. The story of our guide was that Dr. Sun "let-her had a first wife and would have taken during Ching Ling as a concubine. But the unwed lady refused to be a concubine and insisted he divorce his first wife and then marry her. She became an activist, a leader of the People's Republic of China.

Her house, however, is simple and unassuming. The receiving and dining rooms where Dr. Sun Yat-sen received foreign diplomats are small, comparable to those in ordinary middle-class homes. The large armchairs are in the upholstered women style; the desk, carved side tables and coffee table as well as the unpretentious Oriental porcelain vases and blue-and-white vases are Chinese. The dining table sits only eight at the most.

PUDONG DEVELOPMENT PARK

YIN JIN Road (Shanghai)

Hangzhou

NK traveled for two and a half hours out of Shanghai to Hangzhou. Our buses left the densely populated centers of business buildings and crowded residential zones. Now farmlands lined each side of the highway, dotted now and then with farmhouses that were two or three stories high. Some had a sort of round turret on top. Gidday said that was "where the family keeps their dead."

The island on the center of the highway was filled with flowers all the way, bright, well-cared for beds of yellow and red.

In Hangzhou, the streets were filled with people. Dusty and calm. Pictures framed the cars. We were brought to the Temple of Tai Si, grown at and national town of China. In 1961, that composed of traditional Chinese buildings and gardens was declared a national protected monument by the State Council. In here are the tombs of Yu Fei and his son. On nine plaques are Chinese characters made by Yu Fei's mother for his to the Motherland. We pushed with the crowds of local tourists, as tourists do we went to celebrate Labor Day, which they also made on May 1.

Hangzhou grows the best Chinese tea in known as tea-seed hillsides. Viewers are the tea pickers, choosing only the tops with three tiny leaves from among the thickly branching bushes. This is women's work, said the guide, because men are not that patient. But it is the men who roast the leaves by hand in huge, hot pans like our home.

With many homemade smiles, a girl told us how to brew tea. The best is their Dragon Well tea, very green in color, fragrant and smooth-leaved. We were told of its many virtues, being an antioxidant and cure-all. Of course each one of us came away with several cans. The girl packed each can/carefully very tightly (Can she have tea-packers, she said), tamping the contents down, further evaporation, dust-tea. —Still pure tea in a can of about eight ounces, which was about P2,100.

We took a boat cruise along the West Lake, viewing a peaceful unspoiled green shore. In the distance was the multi-roofed Six Harmony Pagoda. Our visit to the Chinese Tea Museum was in those neat, pedaled-roof porches from which one could watch goldfish (carp) as large as mother herons, was on short by rain.

Toilet training

Oh yes, the toilet incident. In women's public toilets, almost all cubicles have the entire bowl built into the tile floor, to edges flush with the floor. In other words, a lady has to squat to use them. There may be only one western toilet in an aisle of 15 cubicles. So there usually is a long queue of foreign women in front of the western toilet.

My go-getter friend, Bee Martinez, had sought out how to use the Chinese toilet when we went to Beijing, two years ago. On the way to Hangzhou, I decided to avoid the waiting line and do it the Chinese way. Well, I did, but while doing, my legs threatened to do a ballet right because the floor was wet and slippery. Fortunately, with a desperate prayer, I got my old knees to work and stood up. But from then on, Bee, don't persuade me to try it again.

I forgot all about that when we had lunch in Hangzhou, arguably the best meal we had in China, according to Cindy San Pedro, my gourmet friend. Among other dishes, we had chicken, steamed in clay, wrapped in cellophane, unwrapped in front of us, to scrumptious a perfume to us honestly flavor "beggars chicken," said someone and I thought, what a misnomer.

All our lunches and dinners were multi-course, hearty and I could have gained five pounds. Nine in me, I thought, as Lita Flores and I browsed through the pretty dresses in the Shanghai department store along Nanjing road, the major shopping street. The Shanghainese women are almost all so slim. I am a medium here, there I am XXL.

New Macau hotel

The Venetian Macao Resort Hotel opens its doors to the public, middle of this year. Like the Venetian Las Vegas, it was built by legendary American hotelier-businessman Sheldon G. Adelson of the Las Vegas Sands Corp. The new property will become by several thousands the number of upscale rooms on Macau's Cotai Strip, which is getting to be known as Asia's Las Vegas. It has an astounding 300,000 sqm. of the resort's entertainment attractions under other landmarks are Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Center with the 1000-seated Theatre and the world. Its Macau Indoor Arena's Grand Convention and Exhibition Center recognized as the city's most spacious convention facility, and Sites Parisi's Parisi Macau, duller behind the Eiffel in Las Vegas and this Bellagio. The Macau Government Tourist Office is at both 11-17 Cotai's Tower, 1207 Ave. D. Antonio Pillago, Macau. Call 853 2316 or 8 2328 8.

Travel Briefs

May tours

Interisle Tours has itinerary holiday packages to three popular destinations this May. A four-day tour of Shanghai is set May 17-20. It includes excursions to the magnificent rice terraces, Dragon village of Longsen, the Mountain Province's capital Baguio and the resort of Sagada. Separate three-day tours to Bohol and Palawan are scheduled May 18-20. Sumisi and stay at Hotel Fleuris. Call 8403888 / text 8168500.

Hotel wins int'l awards

The Level Management team of Promenade Makati City Hotel, Manila garnered the Regional Events Management Team of the Year award by the Orient, Malaysia, Vietnam and Philippine region, as well as the Global Leadership Event Management Team of the Year Award. Renaissance Hotels, a the Worldwide Sales and Marketing and Event Leaders Conference for all Marriott, Renaissance and Courtyard Hotels. The international conference was held in San Francisco, California. The 13 members of Filipino team (under 13) other prestigious Renaissance establishments from Europe, Asia and Middle East. Led by events director Joy Pampolina, the Renaissance Event Management team was cited for their exceptional handling of special events such as the George Washington Ball, Australian National Day, Philippine-Pacific Conference, Canadian National Day, Dolce Lemon Tree's Ruby Launch, Grand Wine Experience, among others. They were also recognized for their innovative style of managing events that coincides with various event styles. The Renaissance is currently promoting their Work and Play Weekend Meeting Package for companies seeking for out-of-town venues for their meetings, team-building and other conferences, retreats and events. Renaissance deals of the package will get a special discounted rate in a Deluxe Room. Call 8178888.

DWSS Helena Joy Fayngayong, director of Event Management Joy Rongallo, Tiffany Ong and Liz Gordula, Secretary Ann Mariano, Monica Abalos, director of marketing Cristy Silvestre Carreon, event stylist Robert Silfasa, Shaolin Corpus and Ken Pamaran

Sunday LIFESTYLE

FUKUDOME-TURALBA NUPTIALS

Doctors in love

FROM THE FITTED halls of Brown University in Rhode Island, where they were pursuing their respective promising medical practice, Angela Turalba and Eugene Fukudome crossed the Pacific as become man and wife at the splendid San Sebastian Cathedral in Lipa City, Batangas.

The week before the wedding saw the young couple in a whirlwind of activities. The two gave dinners for close friends and relatives at Guyomi and Sorrin in Makati, then they were feted in a barrio fiesta held at the Turalba residence in Lipa where traditional Filipino cuisine was served and folk dancers delighted guests.

On the day of the wedding, Angela enthralled everyone as she, in a Cecilia Bercera bridal gown, ascended into the orchestral for the wedding march, while the groom, ever more handsome in his fringe benefits, waited.

In a quiet ceremony, Angela and Eugene exchanged wedding vows and slipped the wedding bands from Tiffany's into each other's fingers to matching vows.

The groom's parents, Toshihiro and Gemma Fukudome, beamed with pride and approval, as did the bride's parents, Antonio Turalba Jr. and Maria Cristina Mabini Tarazona, both architects of the Arabe Group of Companies.

Pile it the best-looking motorcade ever as backdrop, the newlyweds welcomed guests at the elegant Monti Malaraya Golf & Country Club for the reception. The club's culinary team prepared a lavish spread of traditional Filipino and Continental cuisine, with complement Japanese delights created by the chefs from Tanabe Restaurant. The wedding cake, a layer of chocolate and strawberry shortcake sprinkled

BOOTOMB H

CAKE by chef Huey Siam

EUGENE Fukudome and Angela Turalba

Breakfast parties by the bay

HOLDING A MORNING reception could very well be a nice change of pace for everyone. Breakfast parties can be fun and less formal than dinner affairs.

But, no matter how framed or fathomed the wedding is, there should be an air of relaxation. The attire, table setting and food create this atmosphere.

Holding your wedding against the backdrop of Manila Bay while feasting on gourmet concoctions is always a pleasure.

I Esplanade, the newest venue at SM Central Business Park, Seaside corner Bay Boulevard in Pasay, introduces its Breakfast Promo Package for weddings, private parties and corporate events. Priced at P350,000, this package for 200 guests includes an air-conditioned venue with food and catering services, A Couple Invites, Assorted Bread or Pastry or Crepe Station, Cereal Bar, Egg Station or On-the-Spot Cooking/Omelette Bar, Filipino Breakfast Menu, Overflowing Fresh Juices and Coffee Blends are featured. Choose from any of the specially planned buffet and set menus by I Esplanade's culinary partners such as Allwyn Catering, Arandia's Catering, dalfinson Catering, Santo Ayal Caterers, Bistro Pan Catering, Benjamin Catering, Betty's Catering Services, Ilano's Catering, Josiah's Catering, Inc., Juan Carlo The Caterer, Manila Catering Services, Tatuyo's Catering, The Chefs and VH&F Classic Food International.

Sample their specialties at Morning Weddings & Events on May 12, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at I Esplanade. Enjoy 168 Well of Bread Baguettes as samples, a-yes can be reservation and free entrance. Call 8158002 or 0915-8830848.

FAIRYTALE wedding gowns by PWDP members Michiele Lim, Jerome Ang, Joel Escobar and Rusi Rivera

REACH wedding by PWDP members Joel Bautista, Susie Bonsubre, Randall Solomon and Dennis Marin

Fantasy weddings

WEDDINGS USED TO BE strictly traditional affairs. But now, brides are becoming more adventurous, especially in their choice of wedding gowns.

Members of the Philippine by the Wedding Designers of the Philippines say this is bound not likely to cease. "Weddings are meant to be fun, a day for the bride and groom to indulge in their fantasies," says PWDP president Michelle Lim.

Thus, the PWDP presents its 2007 Wedding Collection by Edwin Uy (tel. no. 5359561, State Residence 5117886), Joel Bautista (7581550 and 7570811), Rusi Rivera (7983496), Jerome Ang (3238004), Dennis Marin (3427639), Michelle Lim (3355864 and 4139533), Carmen Linares (4179481 and 2098866), Randall Solomon (631-5239 and 632-8347128), Joel Escobar (8730879 and 8007558), Steven Pamaong (8555883) and Dolby E Reggio (6254964).

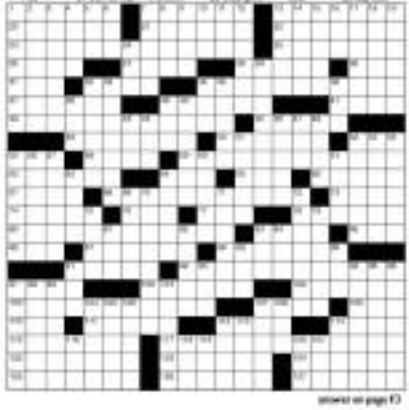
Photographed by Louie Allan, Allen Rowan, Lito Gomila, Michel Macandog, and Oino Lara of the Wedding Photographers of the Philippines in Hacienda Isabella in Tagaytay, the PWDP wedding collection draws its inspiration from the beach, fairytales and the Victorian Era.

Art direction and fashion styling was done by Noel Mangaoil. Hair and makeup by Sweet Chua, Jackie Rivera, Nadez Rivera, Edgar Serrano, Teddy Mendoza and Guy Ferrais Hercules.

VICTORIAN Era-inspired bridal gowns by Edwin Uy, Steven Pamaong, Carmen Linares and Dolby Reggio

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD By Frank A. Longo — **CONCLUSIONS**



answer on page F2

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and a recent shoulder-up photo of one or both of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the Inquirer, PO. Box 2050 Makati Central Post Office 1265 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo ID of the bride and groom is required if the wedding was already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

ZAMORA-NEBAB

Paolo Zamora, son of Alexander Cesar and Gilda Zamora, exchanged vows recently with Gladys Nebab, daughter of Emilia and Edna Nebab, at the Mango Farm Museum, Antipolo. The bride went on with Swiss floral lace from pleated empire tier bodice with serpentine plates cut skirt with 2½ meters orchid train embellished with pearls, beads, sequins crystals and lazaros. It was designed by Leonard Co.

PUNSALAN-NILO

Emil Punsalan, son of Bernardino and Benedicta Punsalan exchanged vows recently with Breanna Nilo, daughter of Heliodoro and Zenaida Nilo at St. Joseph the Worker Chapel, Cardinal Pampanga. Reception was held at Rita's Garden Ballroom, Angeles City, Pampanga.

GALE-MAGNO

Jerome V. Gale, Jr., son of Jerome, Sr. and Perlie Gale will wed Charlean B. Magno, only daughter of Antonio and Rolanda Magno on May 12 at St. Joseph Cathedral in Alaminos City, Pangasinan. Reception will be held at Villa Zeth Asphodel Gardens, Resort Hotel, Labrador, Pangasinan.

BONSAYTIO-ESPEÑA

Rodney Bonsaytio, son of Dr. Bonifacio and Teresita Padilla Bonsaytio, and Lynda Espeña, daughter of Benito and Nenebelinda Trechuelo Espeña were married recently at the Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Tagaytay. The reception was held at Josephine's Restaurant in Tagaytay. The bride's gown was designed by Franklin de Leon.

Marian floral parade today

CAMILLE A. VILLAR, THE youngest daughter of Sen. Manny Villar and Rep. Cynthia Villar, will reign as "Reina Reyna" at the Rajah Sulayman Park, Roxas, Manila during the Flores de Mayo 2007 today by the Congregacion del Santisimo Nombre del Niño Jesus headed by Ben Bolabos. Camille will wear a gown by Nelle Flora.

Sponsored by the Departments of Tourism, City of Manila, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Unilever Philippines, and Fashion Designers Association of the Philippines, the Flores de Mayo procession will wind along Roxas Blvd. Awarding ceremony is at the Puerta Real Gardens, Intramuros.

CAMILLE Villar

PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Doreng

Catholics mark 90th Fatima anniversary

AS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH marks the 90th anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal in 1917, Mexico passed a law allowing abortion up to three months of pregnancy and requiring hospitals to give free services to the poor.

Earlier, on the death anniversary of Hyacinta Marto, one of the three children to whom the Virgin appeared, Portugal passed an abortion law.

Pro-life advocates worry that the same thing can happen here. Although House Bill No. 3773, Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Management Act, does not expressly mention abortion, they say it will encourage contraception, which is opposed by the Catholic Church.

The Rosary for Life members pray the rosary one hour a week to prevent the approval of the bill.

Meanwhile, the Sacred Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Manila, Valenzuela, will celebrate the anniversary of the apparitions.

Holy relics of Blessed Jacinta Marto and Blessed Francisco Marto, who were visited twice when the Virgin appeared in Fatima in Portugal, was entombed yesterday after the diarre procession.

Sonata Mateo, preceded by novena prayers, on May 4 started 6:30 p.m. A Marian exhibit will open May 8 at Museo Nuestra Señora. Schedule of concelebrated High Masses is May 13, 8:30 p.m., Tabuenan Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez, Calbayog; May 13, 9 a.m., Msgr. Josefino Ramirez of the Basilica of the Black Nazarene, Quiapo, and 6:30 p.m., Malolos bishop Jose Francisco Oliveros.

Procession of the national pilgrim image of the Virgin of Fatima will be at 7:30 p.m.

The Pauli Apostolate of Inclusive National Shrine Chapter is Sarmiana mayor. Msgr. Modesto Antonio is rector and parish priest.

In memoriam

The late Ambassador to Russia Rizi Melchor, like his widow Charito, was a devotee of Our Lady of Fatima. Charito remembers how they first met in Washington DC on New Year's Eve in 1950 in the house of Tomas Romero, Philippine consul.

Charito thinks she and Rizi since have been brought together by Our Lady. They visited Fatima separately that year.

The shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, owned by the late ambassador himself, was enthroned during the blessing May 1 of St. Joseph Church by Imelda's Bishop Cubido Reyes.

The church was built by the Melchor family on a 1.5 hectare property in Barrio San Jose, Santa, Rizal.

Charito said, "We built St. Joseph Church in Rizi's memory and in honor of his patron saint, St. Joseph the Worker. A traditional resort, a Gawad Kalinga housing village and a school for by Mater Dei sisters to provide free education for Ignot's children will soon be established."

Eremita fiesta

Novena Masses for Nuestra Señora de Guia will be on May 10, 11, 6 p.m. Bishop Bernardino Cortez will officiate at The Consolidated Mass May 19, 6 p.m., at the San Agustin Church is "Tuesdaysin, Quiapo" or novena celebrity.

The feast day, May 19, is when a Spanish soldier discovered in 1571 the Virgin atop a pandan bush being venerated by natives.

Sta. Ana fiesta

The Sta. Ana Church where Our Lady of the Abandoned is enshrined had the first Novena Mass on May 3, including a Rosary offering at the church patio. May 12 is the feast day of the Virgin. A Marian exhibit is ongoing at the church.

Book of miracles

The second edition of "Little Stories of Faith" is being prepared by Our Lady of Beneficencia devotees in Cebu for the Pinay Books to September.

The book collates miracles brought by God through Sta's intercession. At the helm of the project are Bing Bolina, Eric Belzamora and Tess Imperial, who wrote the first edition. Anyone may be sent to compile testimonies soon.

'Bigasan'

Some 672 parishes in 61 dioceses are being helped by Stewardship's Office of Religious Education through the "Bigasan para sa Bicolnon" project. Only began two years ago. Each parish gets P15,000 to buy rice from the National Food Authority. At the beginning of the project, rice was sold P14 per kilo. It was later increased to P18, still low compared to the regular price of P32 per kilo in the market.

'Kerygma TV'

Bo Sanchez's "Kerygma TV" on Channel 7 will be aired 10:30 p.m. every Tuesday starting May 8. The program is produced by Shepherd's Voice and TV Ministries. Bo's new book, "A Sorrowful Thy Rich," is now available at National Book Store.

New priest

Most Rev. Camilo Gregorio of the Prelature of Batanes will ordain Rev. Arnaldo Bobar Mendoza priest on May 7, 1:30 p.m., at the Archdiocesan Shrine of Nuestra Señora de Luna. Monsignor took up Philosophy at Christ the King Mission Seminary and Theology at Maryhill School of Theology.

Tribe

The Mindanao Benedictine-Cistercian Commission (MBCC) was held recently at the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Malaybalay, Bukidnon. Theme was "Tribe Faith Dialogue and Benedictine Spirituality." All Benedictine and Cistercian communities gather for the MBCC to ensure themselves as they offer Pax Benedicta to the people of Mindanao.

Participants visited the non-Christian indigenous Talaandig tribe in Songco, Lantapan, and were welcomed by Datu Migkay Apu Sinampay and the community in colorful ceremonies.

Guest speakers were Cotabato Bishop Orlando Pacana and Fr. David Lavitch, DCSD. MBCC's new officers are Sister Khalin de Jesus Gomez, OSB, chair; Sr. Geraldine Nixon, OSB, vice chair; Mother Giovanna Garbelli, DCSD, treasurer; and Sr. Maribel Ortega, OSB, secretary.

Mass

Heading priest Fr. Jerry Fuller of Lucban, Quezon, will hold a Healing Mass May 10, 9 a.m., at Jesus the Divine Healer Parish, Tabunan Village, Sasa, Davao City, as part of the nine-day novena of Masses leading up to the feast on May 13. Bishop Vedora Mercado celebrates High Mass at 6 p.m.

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EMILY'S POST
Emily Marcelo

Moneybags, not a knight in shining armor, to his wife

DEAR EMILY,

I met Rowena at a seminar place and I thank God I was able to get her out of that place.

I offered to marry her this year 10 years old then. I have been her husband, best friend and lover since. My work requires me to travel to a city two hours away from where we live.

I gave her all the kindness and love, plus financial support. I gave her money to pay for the rent and a monthly budget. I even set up a business for her, a computer shop.

I also took care of her sister's tuition.

She got pregnant even though I slept with her on many occasions but I was happy. Last year and March this year she went to a good hospital and I paid for all the expenses.

When I asked her sister about Rowena's business, the answered that Rowena had sent the money and a grandfather said they wanted to talk to me. It was then I discovered a lot of disgusting things.

Rowena, my wife, has had a live-in relationship since our marriage. She had no career who traveled money for tuition and no computer-shop business.

But live-in boyfriend is, in fact, the person who was getting. (The sisters) succeeded for the "stolen" she was supposedly sending to school.

I felt like I was punched in the stomach. My wife told me these lies after I received her bank bill.

The sister told me the guy had lived with Rowena since she was 16 and that they had a kid. It would have been better if they just killed me after I heard this story.

My problem is I do not know whose child she gave birth to. I can, and have a DNA test done to establish parentage as it costs P65,000 at St. Luke's Medical Center and other hospitals I have gone in. Rowena and I have the same blood type, A+, and the kid's is A.

Shall I demand they pay back all the money they got from me through their lies that totals about P198,000?

Her relatives said she boyfriend beats Rowena. They also said if I did not acknowledge the child, they would throw it in the garbage or dump it in an orphanage.

Rowena told them, they said, that the child was really mine.

What should I do? Can you recommend a lawyer to take my case and do you know of a cheaper alternative to DNA testing?

AMER

You have been had! Their lawless took advantage of your inherent drive as a foreigner in this country and the most damning ... as a man to love.

You cannot do anything about the seven hundred grand you lost, but you can cut your losses by leaving this woman cold turkey and bid her last goodbye immediately.

However, there is a high probability that you are the father of this baby, according to a renowned pathologist who gave to educated guess based on the blood types you mentioned.

You have to spend for DNA testing, if only for your peace of mind and to keep them from subpoening you as emotional blackmail.

For the moment, do yourself a favor and forget about the pinoy sister's tuition and the nonexistent computer business. Stop flushing down the toilet your hard-earned money by giving it to those breathless, scheming people.

They have cooked enough from you already. It is about time they lost their ATM card—just.

E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph. Author: Lifestyle, or send your letters to be sent to Ate's Mailbox at: Inquirer.net/lifestyle.

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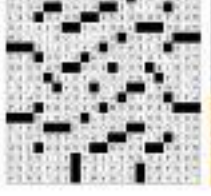
ANSWERS TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD



NEWLYWEDS with Racquel Cruz, Doreen Yu, Rita Palermon, Rosemarie Frondoso, Fidelis Pardito, Lolita Fuentes, Teodoro Salud, Victor Almoroog, Dian Fernandez, Arnold Fuentebella, Marcos Pardito, Robert Funster

Doctors in love

WITH MARIE Fukukawa, Shirlee Nazario, Arleen Moreno, Abigail Hog, Arnelia Gabriella T. Fuentebella, Nazeer Bai Khan, Fumiaki Yasu, Eiichin Fuad, Hibashi Alexander Shimizu, Jose Antonio Torralba, (from rear) Arianna Francesca Torralba, Anna Mirasol Torralba, Gabriel Manson Widjaja

Pineapple #1

with chocolate and fire, was especially created by Anny Sison. The Guest of engagements of roses and orchids were designed by designer Paddie of Floral Designs.

As a way of expressing gratitude, the couple presented guests with dainty fans made out of handmade paper and traditional Japanese obiaware coasters in Floral with pouches to signify happiness. Defiantly unspicious were wittedblings for a young and good-looking pair of lovebirds.

WITH THE GOOD's parents, Antonio A. Torralba Sr. and Maria Cristina V. Torralba, and the groom's parents, Cassia and Toshihiro Fukukawa

ENTERTAINMENT
Editor Emma G. Nikolay

Binoe goes global

Ato Bautista's 'Blackout,' starring Robin Padilla, showing in int'l festivals

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ATO BAUTISTA'S PSYCHOlogical thriller "Blackout," the follow-up to his acclaimed debut, "Sa Aking Paglusong sa Iyong Kadiliman," is making the rounds of international film festivals.

Produced by Unitel Pictures, "Blackout" top-bills Robin Padilla and Iza Calzado. It is set to open locally on June 13.

Bautista, who co-wrote the screenplay with Diego Pesico, describes his new film as "a cross-breed of the horror and psychological thriller" genres.

The goal

"Japan, Thailand and Korea made waves abroad with horror movies. I precisely wanted to veer away from that. My goal is to present myself as a Filipino filmmaker abroad," he tells Inquirer Entertainment.

This Oct. "Blackout" has been chosen to the San Francisco Asian American (March 15-25) and the Imbarcapella Film Festivals (April 20-May 6), and will be screened in the New York Asian American International Film Festival (July 19-28), the Asian Film Festival of Dallas (Aug. 23-30) and the Goteborg film fest in Sweden next year.

Bautista is no stranger to the film fest circuit. "Sa Aking Paglusong" was an official selection in the short-cuts section of the Mar del Plata film fest in Argentina and the Split film fest in Croatia. It also competed in the new filmmakers section of the Warsaw film fest in Poland.

Pinoy touch

In "Blackout," he intended to show a different kind of Filipino in audiences here and abroad.

While other local filmmakers would highlight poverty and the plight of OFWs, he focused on "the color palette, camera movement and acting" as elements that would lend a distinct Filipino touch to his movie.

"It's very technical," he explains. "Japanese and Korean movies are soft, cold lighting. Thai films, lots of yellows and greens. Mexican movies are the closest to Pinoys—very warm and inspired, with lots of colors and pastels."

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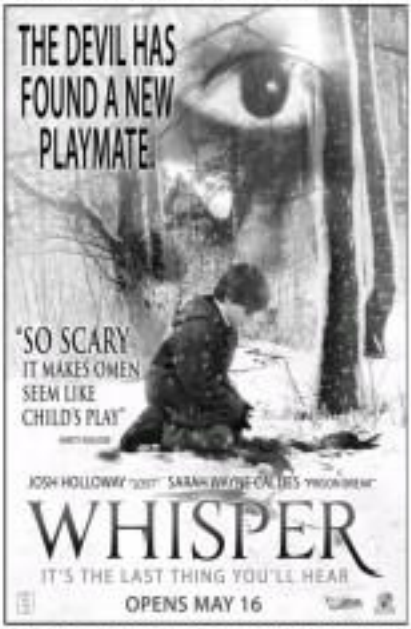

Generally und

BEFORE IT HAS ITS FIRST TELECAST last April 29, GMA-7's new show Incontrol talk show, "Show Me Control," promised that it would alter the landscape of its specialized (beh), well-worn approach to and features designed to excite viewers.

To see what the promised excitement was all about, we caught the show's first telecast, and found that the program featured the standard local show fare—bimbo, scandals, rapsters, "live from the bosses' mouths" interviews, and stellar no-cuts confrontations.

Nothing much that was new there, but hold your horses: "Show Me Control" did feature stories about US Entertainment news and gossip, with fresh video clips to make them more exciting.

Other show biz talk shows don't have this, so it was indeed something new that the program could legitimately boast about.

After a while, however, we were bored by the daily banalities between local and "imported" or "network" gossip—the small, mindless, pro-disability and entertainers.

Yes, the saying American celebrities were bigger names in world celebrity entertainment, but others push (sometimes

2 RP fil

By Marinel R. Cruz

TWO FILIPINO FILMS AR
ting in the fourth Cin
Festival, an online direct
Japan-based

Rhaya dela Cruz's "L
pose" and Nick Olanka's "
Saviour" are up against
short films from aspiring
the Fitchin Contempory

"Can-A-Slippery" is a
from the shores who ga
with an empty can as a
"Wonder" is about the in
western scented. Both
awards in other worldwide

The other films under th
Ladia Guerrero's "The Ha
del Arco's "Is Ito Ito Sing
Guillermo Ruiz' "Sanja"
Tinamboi, "The Cleaning"
Spain's Javier Alpayana
Weekend," Peru's Ernesto
Bado" and Claire Walka's "
A surprise-ball" documenta
Nina's "Old Women Dropp
Rose' "Mom" and Nadia

COLUMBIA Pictures, distrib
reports that the Tobey Mag
edition on its first day. "The
and best single-day record [
six less than Improved. The

Binoe goe

Principal Photography

In "Blackout," a [illegible]
gleaned from the images
and earth colors. For ins
Robin and Liz.'

Crucial Factor

Location was also crucia
been looking for free days
apartment compound [illegible]
near the Ateneo frame, by
It was right under his
mercy was vacated four
about."

Movement is also impor
he couldn't restrict move
feeling that something is al

Shot on Panasonic Var
six...for more close-ups
or elevens-mounted dolly

He explains: 'A Magicam
on tracks, and allows the c
but the movement is smoo

Cast support

He was also very particu
in the department, he
pool.

"Before, who was my ch
Pitoy' and 'Batchibuki' [illegible]
They worked for a few sh
costumes. These days bef
to 1, Apartments."

The script was another a
"I wanted someone who lo
has great potential as a co

erwhelming start for 'Show Biz Central'

VIEWFINDER

Sendee U. Torre

The gang's all here

WINNER Bea member "Oyayo" gang led by George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Matt Damon in "Ocean's Thirteen."

In the third "Ocean" movie, the gang has only one reason to pull all three biggest casino heists – to defend one of their own. See, they're going to need more than just balls to do it.

Robbie casino owner Willy Bank (Al Pacino) is the gang's common this time around, after he double-crosses Danny Ocean's friend and mentor (Elliott Gould), the gang plots to ruin him, both financially and psychologically. The plan is ob-

Jowapi goes house

WE'S Sisay owes in the current rage among some female vocalists, a multi-instrument-wielder who's now doing—and for her, in the person of new star talent Jowapi.

The solo debut CD titled "The Awareness Project" has two familiar pop tunes and one original with jazzy vocal techniques against steady brass horn arrangements.

British Council exhibit

THE BRITISH Council hosts an exhibition of wall-hosted works by Gina Arellano, Blare Gaston and Dino Saldaña-Sa until May 19 at the council's Rizzolidge Learning Center.

The three artists have been invited to exhibit their works and perform at the prestigious Edinburgh International Arts Festival in Scotland this July. Call 894-1021 to 14.

ns in Japan fest

"Sarsuela" (Russian Federation).

Rashkin's Aeroplan's "The Truth Itself" (Japan); Lin Tay-Jen's "Bambi" (Taiwan); Sweden's "Mikesh" (drama); Kim Ui-Seok's "Spirit" (Korea); Aamir Tandia and Rhea Shaw's "Chad Vader: Star Shift Master" (USA); Rhaul Bankster's "Puppa" (Ireland); and Julia Bankster's "Wild Rich Ireland" (Ireland).

A total of 80 films in three categories—features, animation, documentary—were selected, exhibited and screened for global viewing. Some movie fiction, one animation and one documentary—will be chosen for the Global Audience Award through public voting. The winner will receive $1,000 each (according to the festival website, www.sen.com) and are automatic nominees for the grand Prix Award, with a cash prize of $30,000.

A five-member international jury and The audience will also determine the winner of the Cox.on Grand Prix and Tomoki awards. Two short films will receive the Yamashi Award and a cash prize of $1,000 each.

es global

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7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 ANG CUTE ng INA MO

NOVALICHES

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
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PIONEER

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4 SPIDER-MAN 3

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1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
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LIPA

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DASMARINAS

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
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5 SPIDER-MAN 3

ANGELES

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

IMUS

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SHOOTER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 ANG CUTE ng INA MO

STARMILLS

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 ANG CUTE ng INA MO
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3

BACOLOD

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 RESERVE
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 PATHFINDER
6 SPIDER-MAN 3

ILOILO

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 ANG CUTE ng INA MO
6 PATHFINDER

How kissing Piolo affected Regine

NEW YORK—OVER THE PAST week and a half, hundreds of filmmakers and actors have descended upon downtown New York City for the ninth annual Tribeca Film Festival.

Among those who left memorable impressions were an "Instagirl" star-turned-director, a child actor all grown up, and a Mexican heartthrob-turned-documentarian. Each one spoke with The Associated Press.

ANNA PAQUIN

Born in Canada, raised in New Zealand and currently living in New York, Anna Paquin may have a restless life. But in "Blue State," she plays a very American character who's flowing the country after the reelection of President George W. Bush in 2004.

The 24-year-old says she's not especially political. "I've actually never voted because I don't live anywhere I'm allowed to."

DIEGO LUNA

Twelve-female fans of Diego Luna (or just thirty-six metal), that the actor would hide himself and stay off camera as an interview.

But the 27-year-old Mexican star of the internationally hailed "Y Tu Mama También" (2001) did just that. At Tribeca, Luna premiered his directorial debut "Cinema," a documentary on the legendary Mexican beauty Julio Cesar Chavez.

Of filmmaking, Luna says: "I never went to school (to learn). A documentary gives you (more freedom) to tell a story."

KEVIN CONNOLLY

The North American premiere of "Spider-Man 3" in Tribeca may have drawn the most attention,

but the more interesting superhero movie was Connolly's "The Gardener of Eden."

Connolly, who plays Eric Murphy on HBO's "Entourage," premiered his directorial debut at Tribeca, where it was well received and found attention from distributors. That's in part because fans of Connolly's friends played key roles in making the movie: Leonardo DiCaprio co-produced and Lukas Haas ("Last Days," "Brick") stars.

"It was just like three guys (friends going to work together)," says Connolly.

Top of the cabloids

KEVIN Connolly

The top show (on cable) is Lord (which) that work. (and why we are moved, if we are moved.)

• Electronic fernandez, awesome at shoplifting.

• Blackout. Interrogating shoplifter.

RUSHES

• Marriott, hindi ng nilalamnan ng Hispanic.

• P100 limusin si Judy Ann Santos dahil Ara Mina Pinagkasya! (Hah?)

• P100 kinangat Aun si Judy Ann para sa silbing kumpanya ni Rikel (Ah.)

• Hockey mom nah ang P100K gown Mo lang Kay Sharon.

• Sharon, nagyak sa suking sosi Judes at Ryan.

• Hindi raw sya buntis si Ina san Sharon! "Ang alam ko, mina Ani ko siya at minahal siya ako" —Sharon.

• Lima to KC, ukay-kay Sharon.

• Sharon, hands on sa pagpapalaan'in KC. (Bila naman.)

• Regine Velasquez at multimillionaring showbiz exit si Piolo Pascual! Ako ang dapat mag-offair.

• Regine, nanonih homolit kay Nole.

• Acting si Regine sa movie with si Piolo, pang-award.

• Inang Jose aymes, di nalwan sa religious beliefs niya, says Pio-lo.

• Piolo, sa 2012 dakasal. (Ayt).

• Diana Zubiri, Ambassie si Robin. (Go sering.)

JUDY ANN SANTOS

• Bakit mas maalaala ni Toni Gonzaga? Kaya kay Hayd (Lucasic)?

• Someone trying to destroy Angel?

• Pero si Nonoon (Zapanta), nilibreng ng showbiz bago lumipas.

• Il certain sardines-ni Primera's eyes. (Langkat jaw, e.)

• Sino video si Dennis (Trillo) dinadate.

• Ehersis, umulma sa sex video: "Hindi ako dito—ang ka-sama!"

• James Yap, di nanonoon sa pagbibte-ng mga text at saints!

• Baby Boy al-hindi Baby James ang tawag ni Kris sa bunsilang na

REGINE VELASQUEZ

anak.

• Baby James, kakalabas pa lang ng ospital, pogram na ng kompirgal.

• Why Sarah (Geronimo) wouldn't kill in love yet.

• Sarah, pinilit makitipot ng high school. ("Ba! mintat pala.)

• Shannen (Brown) hahaba ng roots kunon.

• Magkakasal? Ara Mina at Jomari Yllana sa rally si Lomari's brother-politician's brgy.

• Will Sessanmate, Isabel sa di-ink? (Ano ka Isat?)

• Mirriam Quinnbee. Ma-kan na nga, nagmaldita pa?

SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2007 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER H0

ENTERTAINMENT

Watch out, Spidey!

Christian Bale is back as Caped Crusader

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepomuceno

LOS ANGELES—ALBUM LITTERING: DEADBEATS can be the harshest activities one can engage in.

These musicians are waged by record companies for journalists so they will be familiar with artists' new CDs before their interviews.

You sit in a dark hotel room with a view of the driveway's grand exit with several managers—suitors and the record company publicists or assistants—while listening to a CD. You try to avoid staring at your fellow listeners so, as you slouch on a chair, you contemplate your scruffy shoes, the stained carpet, or the ceiling. Or you stand up and, for the millionth time, inspect the ground mud. Out of boredom and desperation, you begin to see the roof as a Jurassic garden.

Amazing body

But on the heels of Ridley Magalit's box office shattering return as Spider-Man, Christian Bale is coming back his face out as in "The Dark Knight," sequel to "Batman Begins."

So Christian, who lost an alarming 100 pounds for 2000's "The Machinist," bulked up for his first Batman movie and lost weight again, to buff over more. He wears a short-sleeved black T-shirt that showed off his muscular biceps in a certain press con.

When a journalist evinced her question with "You have an amazing body of work...," another lady reporter interrupted and said, "You have an amazing body. Period."

Christian—bowing a bit so nervous—couldn't help but smile and say, with a finger pointing at the admiring reporter, "Naughty, naughty. She's getting nasty up here."

In "The Dark Knight," which he is currently filming for a 2008 target release, Christian has some interesting new cast mates. Maggie Gyllenhaal has replaced Katie Holmes as Mrs. Tom Cruise, as Rachel Dawes. Heath Ledger has a lot to live up to as The Joker since Jack Nicholson went to town with the villain role in 1989's "Batman." Rounding up the cast are Gary Oldman (as Lt. James Gordon), Aaron Eckhart (Harvey Dent), Morgan Freeman (Lucius Fox), Michael Caine (Alfred Pennyworth) and Eric Roberts.

For now, this was what the entire Wider media wanted to say about his return as the Caped Crusader. "It's the first time that I've survived a role, and this is the third time that I'm making a movie with Chris Nolan. In there's an easier feel for us, of knowing where we're going with the movie. He has set this a really brilliant script. We have the full support and backing of everybody involved with the movie because we've been tested. Whereas before, Chris and I were untested. I will otherwise maintain the mystery about the movie in the same way that Chris likes to keep around the project, which I like."

'High-minded Rambo'

In the meantime, Christian has a new movie, the action-drama, "Rescue Dawn," directed by acclaimed German director, Werner Herzog. He plays a true-to-life character, Dieter Dengler, an American pilot who escaped from a Laotian prison camp during the Vietnam War, only to face the challenges of surviving the jungle.

Since this is directed by Herzog, the film, shot in Thailand with Steve Zahn and Jeremy Davies, is being tagged as a "high-minded Rambo." The project began as a critically praised documentary, "Little Dieter Needs To Fly" about the real Dieter Dengler whom Herzog knew.

Christian lost weight again for this movie (as downplayed it as the interview I'm remembered look and how much weight he lost in "The Machinist" are still being talked about to this day.

"My weight loss (for this movie) really wasn't as much," explained (the 33 year-old who was recently seen in "The Prestige." "I wasn't going to go there again. There were wonderful make up artists, nurses. What we did is, and I suggested this to Werner, 'Let's shoot the movie in reverse.' So our very first day was the end of the scene. There we just went backwards."

"So our last day of shooting was the first scene in the movie. There were a couple of years between 'The Machinist' and 'Rescue Dawn.' I did lose weight, yes. But I feel that it's not a particularly important point. It's something that's good for showing a passage of time or an indication of the kind of suffering that they were going through. There's so much more that's interesting in the movie. I learned my lesson from 'The Machinist' as I prefer not to talk about the physical transformation because it becomes the focus."

Perfect match

We asked him about his experience filming in the wilds of Thailand with a director as cult-ish as Werner, among the anecdotes about the filmmakers behind the film, "Fitzcarraldo". He walked from Munich to Paris to visit a gravely ill friend, crawled in and ate from a shoe to keep a fast.

"It's a match made in heaven," Christian

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BANG BARRYMORE DUVALL
LUCKY YOU

It's the first tim
reprising a rol
movie with Ch

very much."

But not everyone share
gritty filmmaking. The st
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Spielberg's "Empire of th
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Lim stated. "Often you ca
much lower when you don

...ped Crusader

...he's ...e, his third ...ris Nolan

OPENS MAY 16

AMERICA's MOST TALKED-ABOUT MOVIE!

HOW DO YOU CONVICT A MAN WHO HAS ALREADY BEEN PROVEN INNOCENT?

ANTHONY HOPKINS RYAN GOSLING

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G4	1 SPIDER-MAN 3	2 SPIDER-MAN 3	3D SPIDER-MAN 3	
	4 SHOOTER	5 SPIDER-MAN 3	6 SPIDER-MAN 3	7 SPIDER-MAN 3
GB1	1 PREMONITION	2 SPIDER-MAN 3		
GB3	1D SPIDER-MAN 3	2D SPIDER-MAN 3		
	3 SPIDER-MAN 3	4 SPIDER-MAN 3	5 SPIDER-MAN 3	
ATC	1D SPIDER-MAN 3	2 SPIDER-MAN 3		
	3 SPIDER-MAN 3	4 SPIDER-MAN 3	5 SPIDER-MAN 3	
ACC	1 SPIDER-MAN 3	2 SPIDER-MAN 3	3 SPIDER-MAN 3	4 SPIDER-MAN 3
M2	1 SPIDER-MAN 3	2 SPIDER-MAN 3		
	3 LUTE AND THE SEA	4 SPIDER-MAN 3	5 SPIDER-MAN 3	

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'Rock' repeats

JOSE LACSON AS CORY AQUINO AND Theole Tolosa as Imelda Marcos, right, are among the headliners of the political spoof "Rock Da Vote: Night at the Museum," which will have its last weekend repeat on May 11 and 12.

Em in Ehlyssa, "Rock Da Vote" also stars Jun Santos, Cindy Pangilinan and Pooh. Together, they present a comic sketch of Philippine politics during election year.

Celebrities and politicians formed part of the crowd who watched the performance in the past three weekends.

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